



# TRANSPORTATION TOOLKIT

FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION  
FOR SENIORS IN ALBERTA



**MARD**  
Medically At-Risk  
Driver Centre

## DISCLAIMER

"These materials are intended for general information only and are provided on an 'as is' basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, the authors, the Medically At-Risk Driver Centre at the University of Alberta, do not make any representation or warranty, expressed or implied, oral or written, statutory or otherwise, as to the accuracy, reliability, suitability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information, including, without limitation, implied warranties or warranties of non-infringement or merchantability. In no event shall the Creators be liable in any way whatsoever, whether in negligence or otherwise, for any loss or liability arising out of or in connection with the use of these materials or the information contained therein."

Bonnie Dobbs, PhD  
Director, Medically At-Risk Driver Centre  
Professor, Department of Family Medicine  
University of Alberta

Tara Pidborochynski, MSc  
Research Coordinator, Medically At-Risk Driver Centre  
Department of Family Medicine  
University of Alberta

Mayank Rehani, MSc  
Research Coordinator, Medically At-Risk Driver Centre  
Department of Family Medicine  
University of Alberta

## COPYRIGHT

Permission is hereby given to any community and/or non-profit organization to photocopy any or this entire *Toolkit* for use within their organization provided credit is given to the source.

© The Medically At-Risk Driver Centre

**ISBN:** 978-0-9781959-3-9

Printed in Canada

Capital Colour (4904-89 Street, Edmonton, AB)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FUNDING

Funding for the development of the *Toolkit* was provided through the Ministry of Seniors and Housing, Government of Alberta.

## CREDITS

The authors wish to acknowledge the following sources as valuable resources that were used in the development of this *Toolkit*.

### Community Toolbox

Retrieved from:  
[www.ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/overview/  
model-for-community-change-and-improvement/  
community-tool-box-overview/main](http://www.ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/overview/model-for-community-change-and-improvement/community-tool-box-overview/main)

### Senior Transportation: Toolkit and Best Practices. A Publication of the Community Transportation Association of America

Retrieved from:  
[www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/  
senior\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/senior_toolkit.pdf)

# CONTENTS

---

## INTRODUCTION (3)

Overview of the Toolkit (4)

How to Use this Toolkit (5)

---

1

## GETTING STARTED (7)

- i. Recognizing the Perceived Need (8)
- ii. Identifying Key Contacts (10)
- iii. Compiling the Information (12)
- iv. Sharing your Results (13)
- v. Holding your Initial Community-Based Meeting (17)
- vi. Developing a Project Plan (18)

2

## DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT PLAN (21)

- i. Developing an Organizational Structure for your Initiative (22)
- ii. Developing a Vision Statement (30)
- iii. Developing a Mission Statement (31)
- iv. Developing Specific Objectives (33)
- v. Developing Strategies (35)
- vi. Developing an Action Plan (36)

3

## CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT (39)

- i. The Six Basic Steps to Conducting a Needs Assessment (40)
- ii. Benefits of a Needs Assessment (55)



## DEVELOPING & SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE (57)

- i. Selecting the Type of ATS Service and Determining how that Service will be Delivered (58)
- ii. Operational Aspects of your ATS Service (66)
- iii. Developing a Policy Manual for your ATS Service (74)
- iv. Managing the Ongoing Day-to-Day Operations of your ATS Service (76)
- v. Launching your ATS Service (77)
- vi. Responding to Challenges (79)



## RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE (81)

- i. Receiving Feedback (82)
- ii. Formally Evaluating your ATS Service (84)
- iii. Learning from Feedback and Evaluation (86)
- iv. Communicating Outcomes (87)



## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE (89)

- i. Fundraising (90)
- ii. Marketing Strategies (95)
- iii. Fostering Collaborations and Partnerships (96)
- iv. Promoting Community Engagement and Leadership (97)
- v. Ensuring Organizational Stability (98)
- vi. Conducting an Internal Review (100)

---

## REFERENCES (102)

---

# INTRODUCTION

Alberta's population is aging, with the proportion of seniors expected to reach almost 20% of the population over the next 30 years.<sup>1</sup> It is anticipated that this aging of the population will increase the demand for transportation services outside of traditional modes of transportation (e.g., private vehicles and/or public transportation). This need is particularly important in rural areas where public transportation services often are not available.

Lack of access to transportation for seniors often results in unmet needs including reduced access to medical services and other 'necessary' services such as grocery shopping and banking. Lack of access to transportation also results in an inability to attend social and religious activities and can compromise the ability to age in place and to stay connected with the community.<sup>2,3</sup> An age-friendly community is one "where all individuals can be full and meaningful participants in their community".<sup>4</sup> In an age-friendly community, policies, services, settings, and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to optimize opportunities for health, participation, and security. This encourages active aging and enhances the quality of life as people age.<sup>5</sup>

Importantly, there is no 'one size fits all' model of transportation services for seniors. That is, communities can, and often do, differ on the amount of resources and relationships available

for addressing the transportation needs of seniors. These may include differing skills and assets of individuals in the community, existing relationships in the community, and the availability of funding. Implementation of an alternate transportation for seniors (ATS) service most often requires that a community builds on these existing strengths, relationships, and resources. ATS services also differ in terms of scope, with some services (and accompanying plans) small in scale, with others larger in scale. There are a number of challenges to implementing ATS services in urban and rural communities. The absence of 'easily accessible' and targeted information on the development of ATS service provision is one of the challenges.

To address these needs, we have developed this *Toolkit for the Implementation of Alternate Transportation for Seniors in Alberta*. The goal of this *Toolkit* is to provide communities in urban and rural Alberta with the resources needed for the successful development and implementation of sustainable, responsive models of ATS services. Our intent is for individuals to identify and utilize the information as it relates to the specific transportation needs of seniors in their community.

# OVERVIEW OF THE TOOLKIT

This *Toolkit* is divided into six sections:



## 1. GETTING STARTED

In this section you will find information on topics that will help your organization in getting started on the development of an ATS service in your community.

## 2. DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT PLAN

In this section you will find information on how to develop a Project Plan for your ATS service.

## 3. CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In this section you will find information on how to conduct a needs assessment and how to utilize the results of this *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* in the development and implementation of your ATS service.

## 4. DEVELOPING & SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

In this section you will find information on how to successfully develop and launch your ATS service.

## 5. RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

In this section you will find information on collecting feedback from the users and the operator/driver(s) of your ATS service and information on how to evaluate your ATS service going forward.

## 6. BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

In this section you will find information related to building a sustainable ATS service.

# HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This *Toolkit* is written for individuals and/or organizations who are interested in developing and implementing an ATS service in their community. Though this *Toolkit* presents information about the development of an ATS

service in a sequential manner; in reality, the ordering of tasks in the development and implementation of your ATS service may not be sequential. Rather, the steps are more likely to look like this:



INTRODUCTION

Notes

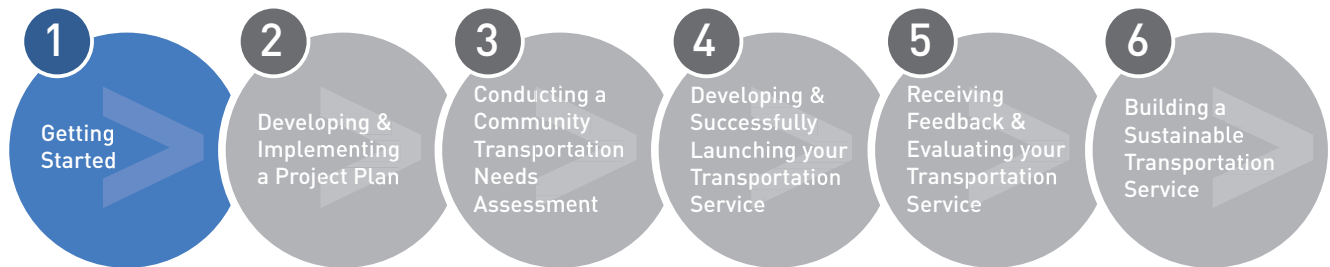
Lined area for notes with horizontal dashed lines.



# 1



# GETTING STARTED



**STARTING UP AN ATS SERVICE** in your community is an exciting but, likely a daunting, task. The first step in *Getting Started* is to gather *basic* information on concerns and/or needs related to ATS services in your community and the resources that currently are available to assist you with this endeavour. The next step involves identifying key contacts and bringing together a group of interested individuals to discuss the need for this type of service. These individuals should have insights into the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community and the skills, knowledge, and/or desire to make a difference in the lives of seniors by addressing those unmet transportation needs. Key individuals should include a mixture of people from a variety of settings with different backgrounds and levels of expertise. A good approach is to first come together informally. This will help you to create initial awareness of the issue, to identify additional names of individuals who may be key to identifying the need for ATS services in your community and/or in assisting in building community collaboration and coordination during this initial stage.

---

## In this section, information is provided on:

- i. Recognizing the Perceived Need
- ii. Identifying Key Contacts
- iii. Compiling the Information
- iv. Sharing your Results
- v. Holding your Initial Community-Based Meeting
- vi. Developing a Project Plan

**An important first step in developing an ATS service in your community is to assess the need for the service and the availability of resources to support this type of service.**

# SIX STEPS TO *GETTING STARTED*

---

## i. Recognizing the Perceived Need

**AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP** in developing an ATS service in your community is to conduct a *preliminary* assessment of the need for and the availability of resources to support an ATS service in your community. Transportation needs can be defined as the gap between ‘what is’ and ‘what should be’ (e.g., the absence of transportation that allows seniors to get to where they want to go in or outside of the community). There are many benefits to assessing the transportation needs of seniors and identifying the transportation resources that are currently available to support those needs at the outset.

### **Benefits to conducting a preliminary needs assessment:**

- a. Demonstrates the magnitude of the problem** – having relevant information on the number of seniors in your community (current and projected) provides you with a better understanding of the magnitude of the transportation problem of seniors in your community and some insights into how you might begin to address those needs.
- b. Provides you with information on the services currently available to address transportation needs** – gathering preliminary information on current transportation services and gaps in those services at the outset also helps you to make decisions about

your priorities in developing an ATS service to better meet the needs of seniors in your community.

- c. Establishes credibility** – knowing about the scope of the problem allows you to come across as knowledgeable, organized, and engaged in the transportation issue. Having this information also strengthens your chance for success with funding applications for your ATS service down the road.
- d. Creates awareness of the need for change** – statistics on current and projected demographics, basic information on unmet transportation needs of seniors in general, and examples of current ATS service initiatives in communities similar to yours help to raise community awareness.
- e. Promotes community engagement, buy-in, and support from the very beginning** – an assessment of the transportation needs of seniors highlights the visibility of these needs and can promote broad community engagement.

### **Resources that can assist with a preliminary assessment of the transportation needs of seniors in your community include:**

**a. Provincial population statistics** – provincial statistics are readily available from Statistics Canada (see [www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140917/dq140917a-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140917/dq140917a-eng.htm)).

**b. Alberta Census data** – each year, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance publishes data on the current and projected percentages of seniors 65 years of age and older by Census Division in Alberta (see the first link below for data presented in a Figure and the second link for data presented in a Table).

[www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-Alberta-Population-Projections-Highlights.pdf](http://www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-Alberta-Population-Projections-Highlights.pdf)

[www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-alberta-population-projections.pdf](http://www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-alberta-population-projections.pdf)

**c. *Building Age-Friendly Communities A Guide for Local Action*** – a document prepared by the Government of Alberta. The guide serves as a resource to help communities lead actions to become age-friendly. It also offers background on the age-friendly communities movement and provides a step-by-step approach to help mobilize your community to become more age-friendly (see [www.seniors.alberta.ca/documents/AgeFriendly-Guide-2012.pdf](http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/documents/AgeFriendly-Guide-2012.pdf)).

**d. *Thinking About Your Future? Plan Now to Age in Place*** – a document prepared by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum.

The booklet contains a checklist that helps seniors make the most of their later years and have more control over their decisions (see page 1 of the document). Although the document is targeted toward the individual senior, it contains valuable information to assist you and your organization in better understanding the needs of seniors in your community (see [www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/working/fptf/paip-cl.shtml](http://www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/working/fptf/paip-cl.shtml)).

**e. *Gathering with seniors in your community*** – holding an informal meeting with a small group of seniors in the community and asking a few specific questions on their transportation needs will provide you with preliminary information on the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community.

### **Sample questions for this informal meeting include:**

- Currently, are there times that you are unable to go places that you wish to go because you do not have a ride?
- Do you think that there are seniors in your community who are unable to go where they want to go because they do not have a ride?
- What transportation services, outside of the private vehicle, are available in your community to help seniors get to where they want to go?
- If there was a transportation service available for seniors in your community, would you use it? Do you think other seniors would use it?

---

## ii. Identifying Key Contacts

**AN IMPORTANT NEXT STEP** in the initial stages of your project is to identify key contacts that can help you to move your initiative forward. In this initial identification, you will want to be as inclusive as possible.

**Key contacts include:**

- a. Seniors** – it is important from the outset to hear from those who will be using the service. As such, including seniors in your community in the planning process will help you to develop an ATS service that meets their transportation needs.
- b. Adult children** – adult children of seniors are an important segment of the population in that they often are the transportation provider for their parents. Including this important segment of the population early on will facilitate the development of an ATS service that meets the needs of seniors in your community.
- c. Health care providers (physicians, home care nurses, occupational therapists, recreational therapists, social workers, etc.), retailers, police/RCMP, and Alberta Transportation Regional Traffic Safety Consultants in your community** – these key contacts also will have important insights on the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community.
- d. Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)** – FCSS staff in your community will have important insights on the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community.
- e. Non-profit organizations, charitable organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, Elks, Kinsmen, Lions, Rotary Club, Royal Canadian Legion, etc.), organizations that advocate for seniors, agencies supporting seniors, individuals in the community involved with senior’s housing, and Aboriginal elders** – including these important segments of the community also will facilitate the development of an ATS service that meets the needs of seniors in your community.
- f. Established transportation providers in your community** – including existing transportation providers will assist in getting their buy-in. Often, these providers (e.g., taxis, inter-regional bus service, etc.) find it difficult to meet the transportation needs of many seniors due to sensory, motor, or cognitive impairments and may welcome the opportunity to provide insight into the needs and be part of a broader community-based solution in this area.
- g. Government officials** – your local elected officials (i.e., mayors, town councillors, Reeves, local members of the legislative assembly, etc.), other influential people in the community, formal and informal leaders, and individuals working for the government are important partners in most, if not all, community initiatives. They can be valuable sources of information on policies and

## SIX STEPS TO *GETTING STARTED*

procedures pertinent to your ATS service, sources of funding information, and relevant contacts. Early contact with this important stakeholder group often will help promote buy-in and support for your project in both the early stages as well as in the long-term.

Ways to contact people include face-to-face meetings, phone calls, email, or personal letters. Because people's time is valuable, it is important, in your initial contact, that you have something substantive to offer or to ask them to do. This can be a request for information related to your project, requests for suggestions of other potential members, or an invitation to a first meeting. Following is a sample telephone script for setting up a meeting with a key contact.

### **Sample Telephone Script:**

Hello. May I speak with (\_\_\_\_)? My name is (\_\_\_\_) and I am calling about a new initiative on improving transportation for seniors in our community. We are in the initial stages of bringing people together to discuss what is needed in our community. I would like to schedule a half-hour meeting with (\_\_\_\_) to get his/her perspective on transportation services for seniors in (town). Is (\_\_\_\_) available to meet with me on (date) and (time)?

Thank you. I will come to (location) on (date and time). I look forward to the meeting.

Meetings with key contacts provide you with the opportunity to identify perceptions on the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community and the level of engagement/interest in meeting those unmet needs. Having a list of general questions that are worded as openly as possible will assist in getting thoughtful and informative answers. It also is important that the key contacts understand that the information that they provide will be held in confidence.

### **Sample questions include:**

- Could you please tell me a little about your organization (e.g., mission, services that you provide, who you provide services to)?
- What are your perceptions about the transportation needs of seniors in our community?
- What do you think can be done to improve transportation for seniors in our community?
- Are there ways your organization could be involved in efforts to improve transportation for seniors in our community?
- What other agencies, service providers, or groups should be involved in our initial discussions on improving transportation for seniors in our community? How should they be involved?
- Do you have any other observations or insights on improving transportation for seniors in our community?

### iii. Compiling the Information

**ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED** your meetings with community seniors and stakeholders, you can compile the information in an Excel spreadsheet. To do this, first, assign each of your key contacts with an identification number (ID# 01, 02, 03) rather than their name. This helps to keep the information confidential.

Next, enter the information for each question from each interview in the corresponding rows and columns (see Sample Spreadsheet below). Your analysis of the information should be at a very broad level (e.g., prevailing themes, ideas, opportunities, insights, etc.).

#### Sample Spreadsheet

<b>ID#</b>	<b>Q1</b> Perceptions of transportation needs	<b>Q2</b> What can be done to improve transportation services	<b>Q3</b> Ways organization could be involved	<b>Q4</b> Other agencies involved	<b>Q5</b> Other observations or insights
01					
02					
03					
04					
05					
...					



---

#### iv. Sharing your Results

**RESULTS FROM THESE** preliminary meetings can be shared with the broader community through articles in the local newspaper, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), interviews on radio and television stations, and through presentations at Town Hall meetings and/or Town Council meetings. Sharing your results with other stakeholders and with the community at-large helps to promote engagement and buy-in. Sharing the results also helps to broaden

your reach to others in the community who may not have been identified in the initial list of key contacts. A presentation (PowerPoint) with key points is one way to share your results. *Again, it will be very important that any information that could identify a stakeholder be removed in any report or presentation of your results.* Sample slides for a PowerPoint presentation are provided on the next page.

## SIX STEPS TO *GETTING STARTED*

### Interviews

- [#] interviews were done between (insert time period here)
- Interviews included:
  - Seniors
  - Adult Children
  - Community Organizations
  - Non-Profits
  - Existing Transportation Providers

### Questions Asked

- Perceptions of transportation needs?
- What can be done to improve transportation services?
- Ways organizations can be involved?
- Other organizations that should/could be involved?
- Other observations/insights?

### Results

Q x. Perceptions of transportation needs?

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

### Results

Q x. What can be done to improve seniors transportation in our community?

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

### Next Steps

Group Discussion

### Things to consider when sharing your results:

#### a. Community presentations – effective use of PowerPoint

- Preparing and delivering your presentation – recommendations for PowerPoint presentations include minimizing the number of slides, choosing an appropriate font style and size, keeping text to a minimum, using graphics or art to convey messages, having slide backgrounds that are subtle and consistent, using high contrast between background colour and font, and checking to ensure there are no spelling or grammatical errors. There are a number of websites that can assist you in preparing and delivering your presentation (see [www.support.office.com/en-nz/article/Tips-for-creating-and-delivering-an-effective-presentation-f43156b0-20d2-4c51-8345-0c337cefb88b?ui=en-US&rs=en-NZ&ad=NZ](http://www.support.office.com/en-nz/article/Tips-for-creating-and-delivering-an-effective-presentation-f43156b0-20d2-4c51-8345-0c337cefb88b?ui=en-US&rs=en-NZ&ad=NZ)).
- Be sure to practice your presentation in advance – practicing will assist you in becoming more comfortable with the material and help you feel more confident when giving your presentation. Tips on delivering effective PowerPoints can be found at [www.statcan.gc.ca/conferences/it-ti2009/tips-conseils-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/conferences/it-ti2009/tips-conseils-eng.htm).

#### b. Engaging community members – using public service announcements (PSAs)

- PSAs are helpful in raising awareness of the issue and can be effective in getting broader community engagement, for publicizing upcoming meetings, and in assisting in fundraising efforts. PSAs can be run on the local radio and television station or inserted into your local community newspaper.

#### In writing your PSA, consider the following:

- Who do you wish to reach through your PSA? Which media outlet is most likely to reach your target audience? Answers to these questions will help you with the content of your PSA as well as in selecting your media outlet.
- What is the purpose of your PSA? It could be to simply raise awareness of the transportation issue, to promote engagement, or to advertise a meeting. Understanding the purpose of your PSA will help you to write your PSA so that it resonates with your target audience.

## SIX STEPS TO *GETTING STARTED*

### **The following tips will help you in writing more effective PSA's:**

- Identify one or two key points and focus on those points;
- Identify a 'hook' to grab attention (e.g., it can be an impactful statistic, an emotional appeal, unique music or art design, etc.);
- Brainstorm with others for ideas that will attract attention and promote engagement;
- Ensure that your facts are accurate;
- Involve your target audience (e.g., seniors with unmet transportation needs; adult children).

### **For more information on how to write successful PSAs, see**

[www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NationalVolunteerWeekResourceKit\\_20113.pdf](http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NationalVolunteerWeekResourceKit_20113.pdf)

and

[www.ptcc-cfc.on.ca/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=248165](http://www.ptcc-cfc.on.ca/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=248165)

---

## v. Holding your Initial Community-Based Meeting

### HOLDING A COMMUNITY-BASED MEETING

is an effective way to increase community awareness and understanding of seniors' unmet transportation needs, encourage community involvement, collaborate with stakeholders, disseminate information, generate ideas, and gain support for solutions to the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community.

#### Tips for holding successful community-based meetings:

- a. Invite smaller numbers** – a smaller number of participants allows for more informal discussion/exchanges of information and creates a greater sense of intimacy and connection. Two or three sessions with smaller numbers are better than one large session.
- b. Have a Master List** of stakeholders and invitees – if it is a smaller group, you may wish to have name tags.
- c. Know the setting** – ensure that the room is appropriate for the size of your audience and the seating arrangements are appropriate. Ensure the audio-visual equipment is appropriate and working *well in advance of the meeting start time*. Be sure to have the number and phone number of the audio-visual technician in the event of equipment failure.
- d. Commit to real dialogue** – the community-based meeting should be a place for the dissemination of information and a place for conversation, not a monologue. Be sure to provide your audience with the opportunity to ask questions and share information. Ensure your presentation is audience-focused from the outset; asking questions early on promotes interaction and discussion.
- e. Provide the opportunity for everyone to participate** – be prepared for individuals who may have dissenting opinions (e.g., individuals who do not believe that there is a need for an alternate form of transportation for seniors in the community). Treat everyone in the audience with respect. Avoid dismissive remarks or gestures as these can undermine your relationship with those in attendance. Provide opportunities for brainstorming. Brainstorming provides the opportunity to tap into potential resources in the group or explore the issue at hand.

---

## vi. Developing a Project Plan

**YOU MOST LIKELY HAVE HEARD** the age old saying ‘*People don’t plan to fail but they fail to plan*’. Creating a plan for your ATS service is the next important step. You can think of the Project Plan as your ‘road map to success’. Specifically, your Project Plan provides direction in that it allows you to keep track of your progress by seeing what you have accomplished and what you still have left to do. It also helps you to stay focused on what needs to be done in each of the stages of the project while also staying focused on the end goal. Finally, your Project Plan serves as a good communication tool and helps to provide buy-in from members of your team as well as from other stakeholders in the community.

### **Creating a Project Plan can/may include:**

- a. Developing an organizational structure for your initiative.**
- b. Developing a vision statement.**
- c. Developing a mission statement.**
- d. Developing specific objectives.**
- e. Developing strategies.**
- f. Developing an Action Plan.**

More detailed information on each of these six areas is provided in the next section of this *Toolkit*.

### **To help you get started with the development of your Project Plan, you will want to consider the following:**

- **Who?**

Who needs to be ‘at the table’ in the more formal stages of the planning process? Again, it will be important to include individuals from community groups or organizations, the business sector, councillors, reeves, etc.
- **What?**

What is your initial goal? For example, is your goal to determine the degree of community engagement for an ATS service? Or perhaps it is to develop and implement some form of ATS service. Identifying this goal from the outset is important.
- **Why?**

Why is this ATS service needed? That is, is the ATS service needed to assist seniors in getting to medical appointments in the community/outside of the community; or to assist seniors in accessing essential services such as grocery stores, banks, salons, etc.; or to accommodate visits to

## SIX STEPS TO *GETTING STARTED*

family or friends or to social events in the community? Information from seniors and their family members can help to inform on why this type of service is needed in the community.

- How?

How will you implement the ATS service? That is, what resources, assets, and/or skills are needed to get the ATS service implemented in your community?

- When?

What is the time frame for the *planning process*? What is the time frame for reaching your goal in *implementing the ATS service*? Deciding on the time frame and setting deadlines for each step in the planning process will help you and your team stay on track and to keep your overall initiative moving forward.

### THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*

was to provide you with the necessary information on starting up an ATS service in your community. Before moving to the next section on *Developing & Implementing a Project Plan*, you should have addressed the following:

- Assessed the need for ATS service in your community and identified resources available for that service
- Identified and met with key contacts
- Compiled the information from your meetings with key contacts
- Shared results with your local community
- Held an initial community-based meeting
- Thought about the information you need to get to start planning your project

**In developing your Project Plan, consider the following:**

- Who?
- What?
- Why?
- How?
- When?





# 2



# DEVELOPING & IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT PLAN



## ALTHOUGH STARTING UP AN ATS SERVICE

is an exciting venture, it takes a great deal of planning and forethought. This phase of the project can easily become overwhelming if you and your group do not apply good planning practices. Effective planning from the beginning will help to keep you organized and focused on your goal of implementing an ATS service in your community. Effective planning also will help you in your communication with members of your team as well as with the community at-large. Finally, effective planning will help to increase the transparency of what you are doing, which helps to promote community buy-in. The goal of this section of the *Toolkit* is to provide you with the information and tools on how to develop and implement your Project Plan.

A thoughtfully constructed and detailed Project Plan is the basis of every successful project. A Project Plan is “a formal document designed to guide the control and execution of a project.”<sup>6</sup>

A good Project Plan provides a blueprint for how to complete a project within a given time frame, with defined steps and required resources.

---

## In this section, information is provided on:

- i. Developing an Organizational Structure for your Initiative
- ii. Developing a Vision Statement
- iii. Developing a Mission Statement
- iv. Developing Specific Objectives
- v. Developing Strategies
- vi. Developing an Action Plan

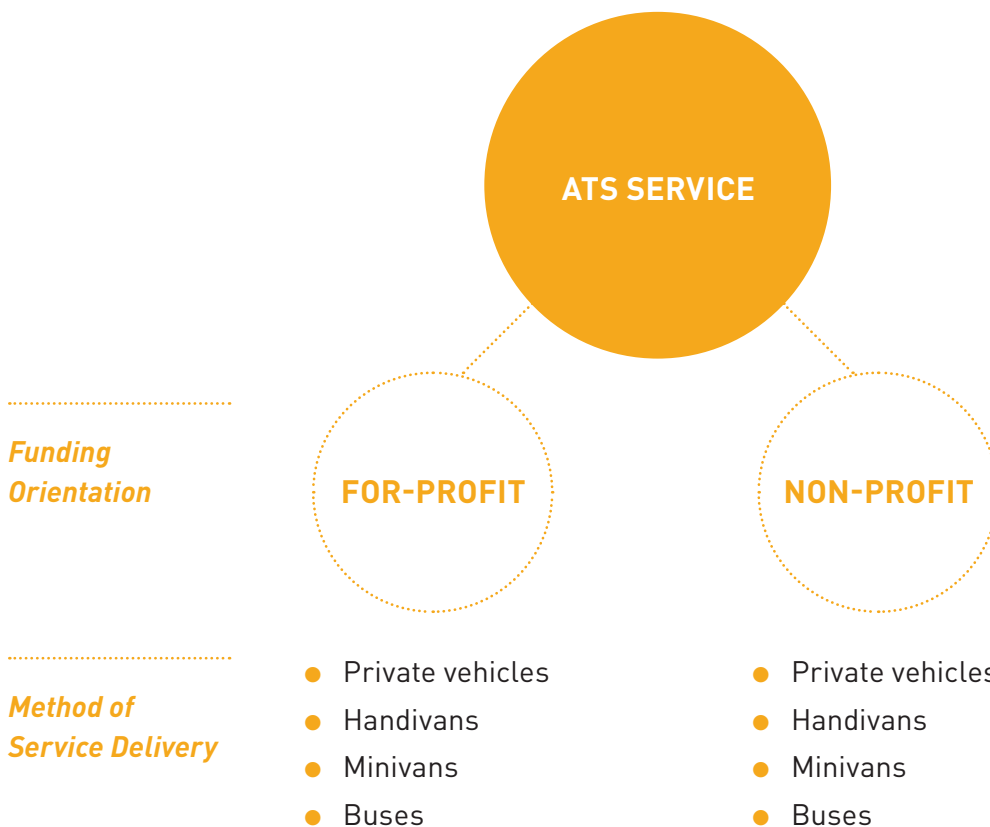
Each of these steps is described in detail on the following pages.

# YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

## i. Developing an Organizational Structure for your Initiative

**AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE** is needed for most, if not all, broad community-based initiatives. As such, you will need to start thinking about what type of organizational structure you need in the *early* stages of your initiative. An overview of organizational structures that you may wish to consider is provided in this section. Before providing that overview, however, it is important to first provide you with a conceptual framework for the provision of ATS services. The benefits of

this conceptual framework are that it helps to organize concepts and to guide the development of your ATS service. The two primary components of this conceptual framework are *funding orientation* and *method of service delivery* (see Figure 2-1). As can be seen, the two funding orientations for ATS services are For-Profit and Non-Profit, with method of ATS service delivery provided most often either via private vehicles, handivans, minivans, and/or buses, irrespective of funding orientation.



**Figure 2-1**  
Depiction of types of  
ATS service by funding  
orientation and method  
of service delivery.

In terms of funding orientation, there are important differences between the for-profit and non-profit approach to ATS service delivery. These differences will be discussed shortly. Of interest, a review of the national and international literature indicates that the vast majority of ATS services in jurisdictions around the world are non-profit.<sup>7</sup> As such, we have focused our discussion on the non-profit approach to ATS services in this *Toolkit*.

From an organizational perspective, a **for-profit organization** is defined as an organization that operates as a business venture for the objective of gaining maximum profits for its owners or shareholders. In Canada, a **nonprofit or non-profit organization** is defined as a club, society, or association that is organized and operated solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, or any other purpose except profit (see [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nnprft/menu-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nnprft/menu-eng.html)). Of note, the terms *nonprofit/non-profit* and *not-for-profit* often are used interchangeably. In layman terms, they are usually equivalent in concept. However, in various jurisdictions there are both legal and accounting differences between *nonprofit/non-profit* and *not-for-profit* organizations. In this document, we will use the term non-profit organization.

## SETTING UP A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

### SETTING UP A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

for your ATS service is a complex process and, as such, is not for the 'faint of heart'. Before deciding to start up a non-profit organization for your ATS service, it is worth exploring whether you can achieve your overall goal by *partnering* with an existing non-profit organization in your community. Examples of non-profit organizations that may already exist in your community include a church or church association, activity clubs, volunteer service organizations, or in some cases, a sports organization. There are many benefits to partnering with an existing non-profit organization in your community in order to accomplish your goal of establishing an ATS service in your community. Those benefits include:

- Saving costs by sharing infrastructure and administrative expense – cost savings can result from shared expenses for facility rental, joint purchases where appropriate, joint staff training, and cost savings through shared IT services.
- Improving efficiency – improved efficiency in outreach (e.g., client recruitment; referral of clients into each other's respective service; awareness of and delivery of services) can occur if the organizations share the same client base.
- Expanding the value proposition (why a customer should use your service) for both organizations – by partnering, both organizations may be able to expand their services without increasing their respective budgets.

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

- Tapping complementary skills and abilities – tapping into complementary skills and abilities such as decision-making, communication strategies, and consensus-building can benefit both organizations.
- Increasing leadership skills – members of both organizations can improve their leadership skills through learning how to work together in new and creative ways.
- Strengthening of both programs – partnering with an existing organization can help both programs to withstand fluctuations in funding, to maintain efficiency, and increase the sustainability of both programs.

In the event that partnering with an existing non-profit organization in your community to meet your goal of establishing an ATS service is not feasible, you may decide to start your own organization. As mentioned earlier, the funding orientation for ATS services can be either for-profit or non-profit.

The term **non-profit organization** is generally applied to organizations representing one of three groups: a registered charity, a foundation, or a non-profit corporation.<sup>8</sup> Definitions of each of these three groups is as follows:

**REGISTERED CHARITY** – distinct from non-profit corporations, charities run programs that meet the charitable activities as outlined by the Canada Revenue Agency’s (CRA) Charities Directorate (see [www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/activities](http://www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/activities)). They are registered and regulated by the CRA and are able to issue tax receipts to donors.

**FOUNDATION** – a type of registered charity that primarily exists to distribute funds to qualified donees (see [www.sectorsource.ca/resource/glossary/qualified-donee](http://www.sectorsource.ca/resource/glossary/qualified-donee)). Canadian foundations may give grants (donations) to other charities, they may exist to be a funding arm for another charity such as hospital foundations, or they may carry on their own charitable activities.

**NON-PROFIT CORPORATION** – incorporated as a legal entity separate from its members and directors. Not all non-profit corporations register as a charity with the CRA. Non-profit corporations can earn a profit, with the profits used to further the corporation’s corporate goals (and not be distributed to shareholders, members, or directors). For more information on non-profit organizations and a charity, see [www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/starting-organization](http://www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/starting-organization).

It also is important to note that registered charities and non-profit organizations are defined differently by the CRA. A helpful chart outlining how each is legally defined according to the Income Tax Act can be found at [www.charitycentral.ca/docs/rcornot-en.pdf](http://www.charitycentral.ca/docs/rcornot-en.pdf). Service Alberta also has valuable information related to starting a non-profit organization. Links to information on non-profit companies, societies, charitable organizations and non-profits, and registering a charity are provided below (see a. through d.).

**a. Information on Non-Profit Companies can be found on the Service Alberta website at [www.servicealberta.ca/714.cfm](http://www.servicealberta.ca/714.cfm).**

Specifically, there is information related to the following:

- What is a non-profit company?
- How do I incorporate a non-profit company?
- How does my non-profit company become a registered charity, conduct a fundraising event, or apply for a gaming licence?
- How can our non-profit company handle internal disputes?
- How can I become an effective Board member of my non-profit company?

**b. Information on Societies can be found on the Service Alberta website at [www.servicealberta.ca/716.cfm](http://www.servicealberta.ca/716.cfm).**

Specifically, there is information related to the following:

- What is a society?
- What is the purpose of incorporating a society?
- How do I incorporate a society?
- How does my society become a registered charity, hold a fundraising event, or apply for a gaming licence?
- How can our society handle internal disputes?
- How can I become an effective Board member of a society?

**c. Information on Charitable Organizations and Non-Profits can be found on the Service Alberta website at [www.servicealberta.ca/charitable-orgs-nonprofits.cfm](http://www.servicealberta.ca/charitable-orgs-nonprofits.cfm).**

Specifically, there is information related to the following:

- Who has to register?
- Who doesn't have to register?

**d. Information on registering a Charity can be found on the Service Alberta website at [www.servicealberta.ca/90.cfm](http://www.servicealberta.ca/90.cfm).**

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

The Resource Center for Volunteer Organizations (RCVO) also has valuable information on how to incorporate as a non-profit organization. In their document *How to Incorporate as a Non-profit Organization*, they provide an overview of the different non-profit structures in Alberta (a Society, a Part 9 Company, or a Canadian Company), the Societies Act, the Alberta Companies Act (also known as a Part 9 Company), the Canada Corporations Act, other Special Statutes, and incorporating by a Private Act of the Legislature, as well as information on incorporating a Society.<sup>9</sup> (See [www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/rcvo-howtoincorporate.pdf](http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/rcvo-howtoincorporate.pdf)).

Help in dealing with the complexities of this area also is available from Alberta Culture and Tourism. The Community Development Office has facilitators that design and deliver services to strengthen your organization or group in areas such as strategic planning, Board development, creating plans for fund development and marketing, and identifying, developing, and enhancing partnerships and collaborative relationships. There are Community Development Offices in regions throughout the province. For a listing of those offices and contact information, see [www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/community-development/contact-us/](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/community-development/contact-us/).

### SETTING UP AN INITIAL COMMITTEE TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

**IN THE LAST SECTION**, we provided an overview of different organizational structures for your ATS service. Selecting and then establishing that organizational structure will take time.

In the meantime, to help you get started in the development of your ATS service, you may wish to consider setting up an interim Steering Committee, Advisory Board, or Working Board. When properly organized and empowered, the primary purpose of an interim Steering Committee, Advisory Board, or Working Board is to provide leadership and strategic direction, and act as an 'advocate' for your initiative. Definitions of each of these entities are provided below.

**STEERING COMMITTEE** – a committee that decides on the priorities or order of business of an organization and manages the general course of its operations.

**ADVISORY BOARD** – a body that provides non-binding strategic advice and/or guidance to the management of an organization, foundation, or corporation. The informal nature of an Advisory Board gives greater flexibility in structure and management compared to a Board of Directors.



**WORKING BOARD** – this type of Board leads the organization but also does double duty as staff. Working Boards are common in smaller organizations that do not have the resources to hire employees. Working Boards also have the added responsibility of managing the entire initiative including operations. Members of this type of Board must find a balance between their roles as staff and governance.

In your initial and ongoing recruitment of individuals for your Steering Committee, Advisory Board, or Working Board, attributes of Committee/Board members that are beneficial/valuable include:

- Individuals who are engaged and enthusiastic about your initiative *and* have the time and energy needed for the success of your initiative;
- Individuals with experience in the following areas: business, legal, accounting and record-keeping, and fundraising;
- Individuals with strong connections to your community and who are good team players;
- Individuals with diverse opinions and who have demonstrated the ability to get along with others despite that diversity;
- Individuals with previous experience in the role of Committee/Board member;
- Individuals who are committed to your vision and mission.

**Some roles that should be considered within every Committee/Board are:**

- Chair – to run meetings and act as a spokesperson for the group;
- Deputy Chair – to stand in if the Chair is unavailable;
- Secretary – to keep members informed of meetings, create and distribute agendas, take minutes during meetings, write, receive, and distribute correspondence;
- Treasurer – to manage the finances and accounting.

There are different methods for selecting potential and actual Committee/Board members. A common method is for the initial Organizing Group/Committee to strike a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee is then charged with recruiting and interviewing potential Committee/Board members, with recommendations to the Organizing Group/Committee. The initial Organizing Group/Committee is tasked with the final selection of its Committee/Board members. Once the Committee/Board is established, welcoming and training of new Committee/Board members will need to take place. The training should include a review of your vision and mission, an overview of your organization's history, as well as the roles and responsibilities of Committee/Board members.

## YOUR PROJECT PLAN

At this stage, the group structure that you select will depend on a number of factors including who the members of your initiative are, your overall goals and objectives, and the stage of development that you are at with your initiative. Irrespective of whether you form a Steering Committee, an Advisory Board, or a Working Board, there are three common elements that you will need to address. Those elements are:

- Governance;
- Rules by which your organization will operate;
- Distribution of work.

As an overview, **governance** determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voices heard, and how accountability is provided.<sup>10</sup> The **rules** by which an organization operates can be both explicit and implicit. Typically, many of the rules are explicit, while others may be implicit. Irrespective of the type of rule, it is important that all members of the organization are aware of and understand the rules. Like rules, **distribution of work** can be both explicit and implicit. Again, it will be important that everyone understands his/her role and the expectations that are attached to the role.

The Government of Alberta has developed a number of valuable resources on Board Development and has developed a Board Development Program (BDP). The BDP focuses on improving governance of non-profit organizations by offering:

- Curriculum based training for individuals and groups on topics such as Board Roles and Responsibilities, Policy Development, and Effective use of Committees;
- Consultation and presentation services.

Services related to consultation and presentation include **Workshops**, with these Workshops delivered in two formats – Fundamentals and Open. The *Fundamentals Workshop* comes to you and your organization. In this Workshop, you use your own materials to develop an action plan for the future. In addition, the Workshop Instructors get in touch with the organization's Board prior to the Workshop to customize the curriculum and then follow-up with the organization's Board four to six months after the Workshop. The Workshops allow you to share proven successful ideas

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

from other Boards that have gone through similar situations. Finally, the *Fundamentals Workshop* is for individual Board volunteers and non-profit staff from any non-profit organization and is provided free of charge. For more information about the requirements and to book a *Fundamentals Workshop*, see [www.culturetourism.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/](http://www.culturetourism.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/).

There also is an *Open Workshop* offered by the Alberta Government. This type of Workshop is sponsored by any organization on behalf of the larger community anywhere in Alberta. If you are interested in sponsoring an Open Workshop please contact the BDP to check requirements and to book an *Open Workshop* (see [www.culturetourism.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/](http://www.culturetourism.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/)). You also can email the Community Development Unit at [CommunityDevelopment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:CommunityDevelopment@gov.ab.ca) or contact any one of the offices across the province (see [www.culture.alberta.ca/about/contact-us/#Community\\_Services](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/about/contact-us/#Community_Services) and clicking on Community Development).

Another valuable resource on Board Development can be found at [www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/default.aspx](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/default.aspx).

Volunteer Alberta has developed an excellent resource on the roles and responsibilities of non-profit Boards (see [www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/resources/info-bulletins-english/pdfs/RolesResp09-print.pdf](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/resources/info-bulletins-english/pdfs/RolesResp09-print.pdf)). Although the resource from Volunteer Alberta has non-profit Boards as its focus, it can serve as an excellent resource in the beginning stages of your initiative. In making the decision as to which form to take for structuring your group, it is important to keep in mind that the form should be based on what it is that your group *does*.

---

## ii. Developing a Vision Statement

**DEVELOPING A VISION STATEMENT** for your initiative is an important first step in that it will help you to clarify and communicate your purpose to all those involved. Specifically, your vision statement should be a description of your community's 'hope for the future'.

**Your vision statement should be:**

- a. Broad** enough such that it is shared by members of your community.
- b. Short** enough so that it is easily communicated.
- c. Inspiring and uplifting** to those involved and/or impacted by your initiative.

**Here are some examples of vision statements from other organizations:**

- Alzheimer Society of Canada: *Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's disease.*
- Habitat for Humanity: *A world where everyone has a decent place to live.*
- Save the Children: *A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.*

---

### iii. Developing a Mission Statement

**THE NEXT STEP** is to create a mission statement. Specifically, your mission statement should not only define what you do but also *why* you are doing it.

**Your mission statement should be:**

- a. **More concrete** than your vision statement.
- b. **More action-oriented** than your vision statement.
- c. **Less concise** than your vision statement but usually not more than one sentence.

**Examples of mission statements from the same organizations listed on the previous page are as follows:**

- Alzheimer Society of Canada: *The Alzheimer Society of Canada identifies, develops and facilitates national priorities that enable its members to effectively alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, promotes research and leads the search for a cure.*

- Habitat for Humanity: *To mobilize volunteers and community partners in building affordable housing and promoting homeownership as a means to breaking the cycle of poverty.*
- Save the Children: *To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.*

In reading these mission statements, you can see that they are related to the vision statements but are more concrete. That is, all of the mission statements on this page describe *how* they will achieve their vision. In addition, all three of the mission statements are succinct (one sentence) and clearly spell out the desired goal (e.g., 'to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease'; 'to breaking the cycle of poverty'; and 'to achieve immediate and lasting change in the lives of children', respectively).

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

Creating vision and mission statements is not an easy task. A good strategy is to first develop a few sample vision statements and get feedback from a small group of stakeholders. Once you have settled on the vision statement you wish to use, you can use the same process for developing your mission statement. For each of the processes, you will want to be sure that your statements meet the criteria listed on the previous page. Once you have developed your vision and mission statements, it is a good idea to share them with other stakeholders in the community. Their feedback will help to confirm that your vision and mission statements capture the essence of what you are doing and that you have not left any important information out.

You are now ready to start using your vision and mission statements! For example, you may want to use your vision statement on your organization's website and stationery, as well as on other promotional items that you may produce. Both your vision and mission statements also can be used for communication with media and during community presentations. Finally, reviewing your vision and mission statements at all of your organizational meetings can help to inspire and keep you focused.

**Your vision and mission statements should express the essence of your organization's values and beliefs and provide direction for your organization.**

---

## iv. Developing Specific Objectives

**NOW THAT YOU HAVE YOUR VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS**, the next step is to develop specific objectives. Objectives provide a detailed picture of a step or steps in your plan that are needed in order for you to achieve your mission. There are several characteristics of effective objectives. The best way to remember these characteristics is through the use of the acronym SMART (for an overview, see [www.supplychaincanada.org/assets/u/VHRDMPPADevelopingSMARTObjectives.doc](http://www.supplychaincanada.org/assets/u/VHRDMPPADevelopingSMARTObjectives.doc)).

### Your objectives should be:

- a. Specific** – objectives should provide the ‘who’ and ‘what’ of an organization’s activities. In writing an objective, you should avoid the use of verbs that have vague meanings (e.g., ‘to understand’ or ‘to know’) because this makes the objective difficult to measure. Rather, use a verb that indicates a tangible action. This will provide greater specificity and measurability (e.g., ‘our objective is to provide rides to seniors in our community for medical transportation needs beginning <date>, with the rides being provided in our organization’s <vehicle>, from Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 6 PM’).
- b. Measurable** – objectives should include information that can clearly be measured. Unless you have ‘quantified’ an objective, it will be impossible to determine if that objective has been met. It also is helpful to provide a reference point from which change can be measured. In the example in the first bullet on this page, the objective has the date that the service will start. As such, the *number of rides* that are provided on an ongoing basis can be measured against this reference point (e.g., number of rides per month one year from starting your service date vs. the number of rides provided in the first month of your service, with calculation of the percentage increase in rides over this period of time).
- c. Achievable** – objectives should be attainable within a given time frame and with available program resources. Using the example objective given in part a. on this page, the objective of providing rides on the date specified requires that you have a vehicle and have met all the provincial requirements for licensing and operation of the vehicle; have a driver who is trained and, if need be, certified to drive the vehicle; have in place the appropriate insurance for the vehicle and for the driver; have advertised your service; have a mechanism in place for booking rides; have policies in place for the driver and the passenger; and have the resources needed to operate the service.

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

- d. Realistic** – objectives are most useful when they accurately address the scope of the problem and include programmatic steps that can be implemented within a specific time frame. Objectives that do not directly relate to the program goal will not be of help in achieving the goal. For example, the objective *to deliver ‘meals on wheels’ to all seniors who use our program on an ‘as needed’ basis* is not directly related to ATS service provision. Although many seniors who are in need of an ATS service may clearly benefit from this objective, it detracts from your vision and mission and would interfere with your overall goal of providing transportation service to seniors in your community.
- e. Timed** – objectives should provide a time frame by which the objective will be met. That is, including a time frame in your objectives helps you in planning and evaluating your service.



---

## v. Developing Strategies

**STRATEGIES GIVE OVERALL DIRECTION** to your initiative and explain how your initiative will reach those objectives. You might be wondering what the difference is between a strategy and an objective. A strategy is *how* you are going to get things done – that is, the approach you are going to take to achieve your objective. Objectives, on the other hand, are *what* you are going to do to achieve your overall mission.

**Your strategy/strategies should:**

- a. **Provide overall direction** to your initiative.
- b. **Take into consideration** current resources and assets that are needed for your initiative.
- c. **Minimize barriers** and/or resistance to your initiative.
- d. **Be directed** at your target population.
- e. **Advance your mission** and objectives.

In developing the strategies for your ATS service, it again will be important to consult with members of the community as well as the group that has been brought together to guide your initiative.

Up to this point, we have discussed four of the different components of a Project Plan. These four components consist of vision and mission statements, objectives, and strategies. The following examples help to clarify the difference between these components of your Project Plan.

**VISION:** Our vision is a community that meets the transportation needs of its seniors.

**MISSION:** To provide responsive and affordable transportation service for seniors in our community as a means of enhancing their access to services and overall quality of life.

**OBJECTIVE:** Our objective is to provide rides to seniors in our community for medical, essential, and social transportation needs beginning <date>, with the rides being provided in our <vehicle>, from Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 6 PM.

**STRATEGY:** Apply to the <foundation/funding agency> by <date> for <funding amount> for purchase of a community handivan.

## vi. Developing an Action Plan

**AN ACTION PLAN** describes how the strategies will be implemented to accomplish your objectives. An Action Plan consists of action steps.

**Action steps include:**

- a. What will happen** (e.g., What <action> will occur?).
- b. Who will do what** (e.g., Who will do <action>?).
- c. The date to be completed** (e.g., By when will <action> take place?).

- d. The resources needed** (e.g., What resources are needed for <action> to get done?).
- e. The support that is needed** (e.g., Who/what is needed for <action> to get done?).

Once created, you will want to review your Action Plan to see if it is complete, clear, and current. That is, does your Action Plan include all of the steps that are needed to allow you to achieve your vision and mission? Is it obvious *who* will do *what* by *when*? And, does your Action Plan reflect your *current* activities/initiatives?

### Sample Template of an Action Plan

Objective # 1: To ...

Action Step	Specific Action	Who is responsible?	By what date?	What resources are needed?	What support is needed (e.g., who is needed and who should know what)?
#1	#a				
	b				
	c				
	...				

## YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

Something you will need to consider is the *timeline* for the creation of an Action Plan. Your Action Plan should be created in the first six months of your project. First, you or your group will need to determine who should be involved in the creation of your Action Plan. It may be the same group of individuals who participated in the first four stages of your project (that is, those who participated in the development of your vision and mission statements and the development of your objectives and strategies). Individuals you will want to have participate in the creation of your Action Plan include individuals with business, financial, and management expertise; individuals with writing and record keeping skills; representatives from organizations with ties to your target population (e.g., senior's centre, lodges, health care providers); as well as potential users. Finally, you will want to refer to your Action Plan on a regular basis to ensure that all your identified actions are being completed during the time frames that you have identified.

**THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*** was to provide you with information on how to develop and implement a Project Plan. Before moving on to the next section on *Conducting a Community Transportation Needs Assessment*, you should have addressed the following:

- ❑ Chosen an organizational structure for your initiative
- ❑ Developed a vision statement
- ❑ Developed a mission statement
- ❑ Developed specific objectives
- ❑ Developed strategies
- ❑ Developed an Action Plan



YOUR *PROJECT PLAN*

**Notes**

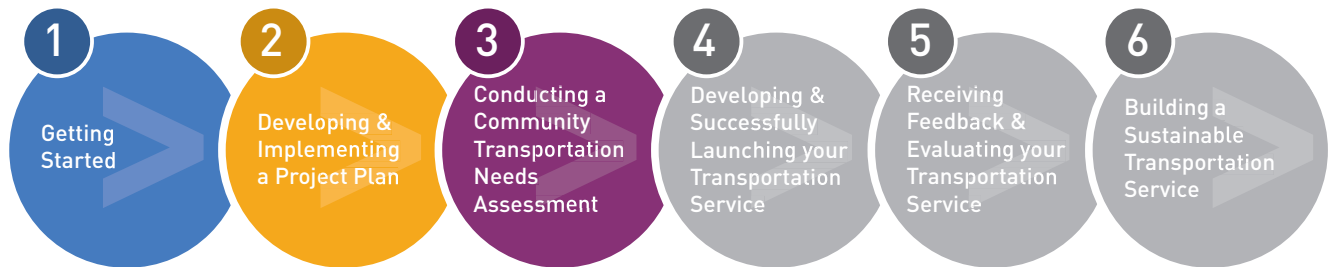
A series of horizontal dashed lines providing space for writing notes.



# 3



# CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT



**CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN** on the work that you have done to date on the development of an ATS service in your community. As noted on page 5, although we present information about the development of an ATS service in a sequential manner, the ordering of tasks in the development and implementation of your ATS service may not be sequential. Rather, the ordering of the tasks may overlap. The next step in the process of developing your ATS service is for you and your Committee/Board members to *better understand* what the transportation needs of seniors in your community are. This can be accomplished by conducting a needs assessment.

What is a needs assessment? A **needs assessment** is a systematic process used for determining needs and/or gaps between current conditions and desired conditions. A **need** refers to the gap between ‘what is’ and ‘what should be’. A needs assessment is focused on a particular target group (e.g., seniors in the community; adult children of seniors in the community), and gathers information (data) using established methods.

A needs assessment consists of gathering information from the community about an issue (e.g., transportation for seniors), then collecting and reviewing the results from the needs assessment prior to developing and implementing your program/service. Relative to this *Toolkit*, the primary goal of a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* is to allow you to better understand the transportation needs of seniors in your community as well as help you to identify the resources currently available in your community that can assist in the development of the desired ATS service.

---

## In this section, information is provided on:

- i. The Six Basic Steps to Conducting a Needs Assessment
- ii. Benefits of a Needs Assessment

# CONDUCTING *A NEEDS ASSESSMENT*

---

## i. The Six Basic Steps to Conducting a Needs Assessment

**THE SIX BASIC STEPS** to conducting a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* are:

- a. Identifying the need.**
- b. Generating the goals.**
- c. Identifying your target population.**
- d. Selecting your methodology and collecting the data.**
- e. Analyzing the data and generating a report.**
- f. Disseminating and implementing your findings.**

Detailed information on each of the six steps is provided in the pages that follow.

### **a. Identifying the need**

You may wonder *why* you need to do a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. There are many advantages to conducting a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* before you design and implement any transportation service in your community.

**Conducting a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*:**

- Allows you to better understand the transportation needs of seniors in your community by providing you with information on the transportation services currently available in the community, as well as the strengths and deficiencies of those services;
- Provides you with information on the *unmet* transportation needs of seniors in your community (and surrounding area);
- Facilitates the implementation of an ATS service that meets the needs of seniors in your community;
- Demonstrates your commitment to your target population, other stakeholders, and to the community at-large;
- Fosters community collaboration and partnerships;
- Provides you with baseline data which can be used to measure your service going forward;
- Last but not least, results from a well-designed *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* will assist you in grant applications for funding your service, as well as assisting you in your advocacy efforts.



## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**b. Generating the goals** (*What are the goals of a Community Transportation Needs Assessment?*)

The goal of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* should be to identify the gap between your desired goals and the current status of transportation services in your community. Your goal(s) must be aligned with the identified need and should include the planned outcome that will solve the problem (e.g., the identified need).

**c. Identifying your target population**

Identifying the target population for your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* seems to be straightforward. That is, you will want to include the individuals who will use your service (e.g., seniors). However,

you will need to decide if you want to include *all* seniors in the community (e.g., those who do not drive as well as those who do drive; seniors living in their own 'homes' [house, duplex, apartment] as well as those living in lodges or assisted/supportive living facilities). You also may want to include individuals who have a direct relationship with the 'users' of your service such as the adult children of seniors, health care professionals, and other service providers in the community. Expanding your target population to include these other segments of the population is likely to provide you with valuable information on available resources, the unmet transportation needs of seniors in your community, and how you can better address those unmet needs.

### d. Selecting your methodology and collecting the data

The methodology that you select for conducting your formal *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* will depend on a number of factors. These factors include resources (budget, personnel, and expertise), the information you want to collect, and timelines. Interviews, focus groups, and surveys are three of the most common methods for conducting a needs assessment. A description of each of the methods, and the advantages and disadvantages of each are provided in Table 3-1.

**INTERVIEWS** involve the collection of data through 'conversations' typically between two people (the interviewer and the interviewee). Interviews can be done face-to-face, over the telephone, via videoconference, or online via the web. The level of training that the interviewer has can influence the quality of the data collected.

Interviews can be structured or unstructured. Structured interview methodology is a means of data collection involving an interview in which all respondents are asked the same or similar questions in a pre-determined format. Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, are more casual and relaxed, with the respondent allowed to pursue a topic that is not directly related to the formal questions being asked. The data collected from unstructured interviews can be less reliable than data from structured interviews.

**FOCUS GROUPS** are conducted in-person with a small group of individuals (typically 7-10) in order to gather information about their thoughts and perspectives on an identified issue or topic. Focus groups are helpful for when you do not know what the issue is or you want more detailed information on a specific issue or in a specific area. Focus groups also are helpful when you want to hear a wide diversity of opinions on a specific issue or in a specific area. As such, focus groups can be very helpful in the early stages of planning a needs assessment.

A moderator/facilitator leads the group. A key characteristic of this methodology is the interaction among individuals in the focus group with the group moderator/facilitator. This interaction is based on the topic or topics identified by the group facilitator. With focus groups, often there is a note taker who is responsible for recording the 'gist' of what each person says, 'how' the comment was said, and 'how' the transitions from one topic to the next occurred. Focus groups most often are recorded, with the recording used to produce 'transcripts' (e.g., a verbatim record of what was said in the focus group). As with interviews, the level of training that the facilitator has can influence the quality of the data collected. As such, you will want to have someone with experience in this area facilitate the focus group.

## CONDUCTING A *NEEDS ASSESSMENT*

**SURVEYS** are a method of data collection that allow for gathering a large amount of data in a short period of time (see Table 3-1). They are desirable when you want to obtain selected information on a large number of questions related to your topic or issue from a large group of individuals. The information collected can be based on responses to closed- and open-ended questions. Surveys can be self-administrated or administered by an individual trained in survey methodology. Surveys can be done via mail, telephone, or online via the web.

**MAIL SURVEY** methodology is a means of data collection from the general population or from a specific target population. Mailing lists are used to generate the potential sample. Paper-based surveys are then mailed to potential respondents, with the request to complete and return the questionnaire via mail, typically in a pre-stamped envelope. A major disadvantage of mail surveys is the low response rate as many mailed surveys are never returned. Mail surveys also do not allow for clarification on questions or provide the opportunity for follow-up.

**TELEPHONE SURVEY** methodology also is a means of data collection from the general population or from a specific target population. Telephone numbers are used to contact respondents, with the information gathered by trained interviewers. The information collected from telephone surveys is generally more accurate than the information from mail surveys in that the telephone interviewers can provide

clarification on questions. The interviewers also will have had training on entering the data in a systematic way which increases the accuracy of the data collected. Unlike mail surveys, telephone surveys are more personable. In addition, data collection is usually faster with telephone surveys (e.g., days rather than weeks but this can depend on sample size). Response rates to telephone surveys are generally higher than with mail surveys.

**ONLINE SURVEY** methodology is another method of data collection from a specific target population. Online surveys, completed over the internet, are usually created as Web forms with a database to store the answers. Statistical software is used to analyze the data. Potential respondents may be identified through a number of sources, with requests to complete the online survey sent through batch email lists with the link to the survey included. Online surveys are less expensive than mail and telephone surveys, and can be more convenient as the individual can complete the survey at a time that is the most convenient to them. Results from online surveys also can be generated very quickly. As with mail surveys, online surveys are impersonal and do not allow for clarification on questions. Incomplete responses and multiple submissions by the same individual are additional limitations of online surveys. Response rates to online surveys tend to be lower than with paper-based and telephone-based surveys. Other advantages and disadvantages of surveys are provided in Table 3-1.

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Once the information has been collected, you will need to determine how to analyze the results. In some cases, it may be relatively easy to summarize the results. For example, if you sent out a 10 item survey to a group of 50 individuals asking them to answer 'yes' or 'no' to each of the 10 questions, it would be relatively easy to compile the results. However, most of the methods for collecting information on the transportation needs of community-dwelling seniors (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys) are more complicated than the above example. You may have someone in your community with the skills to help you

with analysis of your data. Depending on your financial resources, you may want to hire a consultant to assist you. Information on hiring a consultant is provided in Step 5 of this section.

The Medically At-Risk Driver (MARD) Centre at the University of Alberta has conducted *Community Transportation Needs Assessments* for seniors provincially and in several rural and urban communities in Alberta. MARD researchers would be pleased to provide you with background information on conducting a transportation needs assessment for seniors in your community.

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

**Table 3-1.** *Examples and Description of Data Collection Methods and the Advantages and Disadvantages of each Method*

Data Collection Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p><b>Interviews</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A method of collecting data through one-on-one interviews by a trained interviewer with an individual who meets study criteria.</li> <li>● Allows for collection of in-depth information about thoughts and perspectives on an identified issue.</li> <li>● Can be structured or unstructured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Permits face-to-face contact with respondents.</li> <li>● Allows the interviewer to explain or help clarify questions which can help to increase the likelihood of useful responses.</li> <li>● Provides an opportunity to explore topics in depth.</li> <li>● Useful for obtaining quotes and stories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interviewer can influence the responses (known as 'interview bias').</li> <li>● Information may be distorted as a result of error in recall and/or a 'desire to please' the interviewer.</li> <li>● Interviewer clarifications can result in inconsistencies in the way the data are gathered and/or in the way that the interviewee responds.</li> <li>● The volume of information collected often is very large which can make recording and analyzing the data difficult.</li> <li>● Time consuming and more expensive than other data collection methods.</li> </ul>

*continued on page 46 ...*

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Data Collection Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Focus Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A method of data collection through group discussion with a trained facilitator with a select group or groups of individuals (ranging from 7-10). The goal is to gather information about their views and experiences on a selected topic or issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus groups help in understanding the 'whys' of a topic/ issue by allowing the focus group facilitator to probe deeper into the topic.</li> <li>● Relatively inexpensive to set up and conduct.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The quality of the discussion depends on the skill of the facilitator.</li> <li>● Expensive if discussions are audio- or video-taped and field notes recorded.</li> <li>● Produces a large volume of data which can make data analysis difficult.</li> <li>● Outspoken individuals can dominate and 'hijack' the discussion.</li> <li>● Participants most often are self-selected making generalization of the results to the larger population difficult.</li> <li>● Time consuming.</li> </ul>

*continued on page 47 ...*

## CONDUCTING A *NEEDS ASSESSMENT*

Data Collection Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p><b>Surveys</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A method of data collection that provides specific information on the population of interest (e.g., senior’s transportation).</li> <li>● The results can be used to develop a statistical summary of thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and/or opinions of the target population for the area under investigation.</li> <li>● Can be done by mail, telephone, or online via the web.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most people are familiar with surveys.</li> <li>● Members of your target group may be more comfortable completing a survey compared to one-on-one interviews or participating in a focus group.</li> <li>● Can cover a wide range of topics.</li> <li>● Good for gathering data from a large group of people.</li> <li>● Tabulation of data from closed-ended questions is relatively straightforward.</li> <li>● Reduces interviewer bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Depending on the type of survey methodology used, there may be low response rates.</li> <li>● Good survey questions are difficult to write, with development of the full survey time-consuming.</li> <li>● Data may provide a general picture but lack depth (e.g., unable to probe for more detailed information).</li> <li>● Can be more expensive than the other data collection methods.</li> </ul>

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### DETERMINING KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SENIORS

REGARDLESS OF WHICH TYPE of *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* you choose to do, you will want to make sure that you are asking questions that will provide you with the information you need in developing and implementing an ATS service that is tailored to fit the needs of your community. There are five characteristics of transportation for seniors that have been identified and are collectively known as the 5 A's of senior friendly transportation.<sup>11,12</sup> Those 5 A's are: Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Adaptability, and Affordability. Definitions of the 5 A's of senior friendly transportation are as follows:

**AVAILABILITY** – refers to transportation services that are provided to seniors and those services are available when needed (e.g., days, evenings; weekdays, weekends).

**ACCEPTABILITY** – refers to transportation in which service quality is acceptable in terms of advance scheduling; vehicles are clean and well-maintained; service providers provide driver 'sensitivity to seniors' training.

**ACCESSIBILITY** – refers to transportation in which the service provider provides 'door-to-door' and 'door-through-door' transportation; provides transportation to essential and non-essential activities.

**ADAPTABILITY** – refers to transportation that can accommodate riders wanting to make multiple stops (trip chaining); service providers allow for different types of routes (fixed vs. user response) and passenger service (single vs. group); service providers can accommodate wheelchairs and walkers; escorts can be provided.

**AFFORDABILITY** – relates to the cost of transportation and transportation that is affordable (e.g., uses volunteer drivers to reduce costs, vouchers, or coupons available, etc.).



## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The underlying assumption of the 5 A's is that service provision that is consistent with the characteristics identified in each of the 5 A's is more responsive and hence would be deemed to be acceptable to seniors.

In addition to collecting information on the 5 A's of senior friendly transportation, your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* should inform on a variety of other issues relating to a *transportation service for seniors* in your community.

**A comprehensive *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* will provide clarity on the following:**

- The current state of transportation needs for seniors in your community (e.g., What transportation needs are met and/or unmet?);
- The segment(s) of the population in your community in need of alternate transportation (e.g., seniors, persons with disabilities, others);
- An estimate of the number of people in your community who are most likely to use your ATS service (e.g., Less than 50? Greater than 50 but less than 100? More than 100?);
- Reasons for using the service (e.g., For attending medical appointments – in-town? Out-of-town? Accessing 'essential' services such as for grocery shopping, banking? Attending social functions and/or religious activities?);
- The days of the week that people are most likely to use the service (e.g., Weekday mornings? Weekday afternoons? Weekend mornings? Weekend afternoons? Weekend evenings?);
- The geographical area your service would cover (e.g., Is the service needed within the community? Outside of the community to major urban centers?);
- The type of trips that are needed (e.g., Single destination trips such as going to and from the grocery store? Multiple destinations within a trip such as going to a medical appointment and then stopping at the bank and then the grocery store on the way home?);
- The amount people can and will pay for the ATS service (e.g., how much can they afford to pay and how much are they willing to pay?);
- The preferred method of payment (e.g., Would users like to pay for the trips by cash, pre-paid vouchers, invoicing, or through the purchase of passes?);
- The preferred method of booking the service (e.g., How would users like to book trips – booking by phone or booking rides online?);
- The preferred timelines for booking the service (e.g., Booking 48 hours or more in advance? 24 hours in advance? No advance booking?);
- The type of vehicle that they would prefer for the transportation service (e.g., Handibus? Senior's bus? Private vehicle?).

### e. Analyzing the Data and Generating a Report

#### ANALYZING THE DATA

**ONCE YOU HAVE COLLECTED THE DATA**, the next step is to analyze the data. How you analyze the data will depend on the type of data that were collected (e.g., quantitative or qualitative data).

**QUANTITATIVE DATA** are data collected in the form of numbers. The answer choice can be a pre-set choice or open-ended. For example, quantitative data include answers to questions such as “How many times in the last week have you not gone places because you did not have a ride (1 day a week, 2-3 days a week, 4 or more days)?” or “How much would you be willing to pay for an one-way ride if there was a transportation service for seniors in your community?” (any numeric amount accepted). Quantitative data are used to generate averages or percentages from all the responses that are received from your sample of participants and are usually presented as totals, percentages, and averages. These totals, percentages, and averages tell you what proportion of your respondents feel a certain way.

**QUALITATIVE DATA** are typically obtained from open-ended questions (e.g., answers to questions such as “How can the transportation services for seniors in your community be improved?”). Rather than having a pre-selected set of questions, the individual responds with suggestions based on their own opinions. Open-ended questions usually are asked during interviews, with

focus groups, or as open-ended questions on a survey instrument. Open-ended questions provide information on an individual’s knowledge of or position or feeling on an issue. Qualitative data are analyzed for trends or patterns on an issue. As such, results from qualitative data can provide you with general statements about the issue in your community.

Depending on your timelines, the skill set of members of your project team, and funding, you may want or need to hire a consultant or a data analyst to assist you not only with the analyses of your data but also with creating the *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*, drafting and finalizing your data collection form (e.g., interview, questionnaire, survey), identifying your sample, collecting or assisting in the data collection process, and generating the final report. If you decide to hire a consultant, you will want someone with experience and expertise in the area of alternate transportation for seniors, knowledge of your community, expertise in project management and evaluation (e.g., research methodology and statistical analyses), excellent communication skills (verbal and written), and a working style and personality that fits with your organization.

For more detailed information on how to choose a consultant, see [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/98-053.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/98-053.htm).

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### GENERATING A REPORT

NOW THAT YOU HAVE COLLECTED AND ANALYZED your data, your next step is to write up the results. The four basic sections of your report are the introduction, methodology, results, and discussion. A brief overview of each of these sections is provided below.

#### *Introduction*

**The Introduction** provides background information on the area under investigation and states the purpose and rationale for your study.

#### *Methodology*

**The Methodology** section of the report describes in detail how your study was conducted. That is, in this section of the report you will need to describe *who* participated in the study, *how* you recruited participants, *how* you collected the data (e.g., interview, focus group, survey), as well as *who* collected the data (e.g., trained interviewers, facilitators), and the *procedures* you used to collect the data (e.g., in-person interviews, telephone survey). Often, how the data were analyzed is included in this section of the report.

#### *Results*

**The Results** section of the report presents the findings from your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. These findings should be described in sufficient detail and should be related to the purpose of your needs assessment. Tables and figures are good ways to present your findings. If tables and/or figures are used, a description of what the tables and figures are about and a sufficient explanation of the results are needed. A discussion of the implications of the results is not appropriate in the Results section, but rather should appear in the Discussion section of the report. If you have conducted analyses to see if any of your results are statistically significant, the type of analyses (e.g., *t* tests, *F* tests, chi-square) needs to be included, along with degree of statistical significance (e.g.,  $p < .05$ ).

#### *Discussion*

**The Discussion** is the final section of the report. This section of the report includes an evaluation and interpretation of the results, as well as how the results connect to the 'bigger picture'. It also is appropriate to include a section on how the results of the *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* can be applied in the current context.

## CONDUCTING A *NEEDS ASSESSMENT*

### f. Disseminating and Implementing your Findings

#### DISSEMINATING YOUR FINDINGS

TO DATE YOU AND YOUR GROUP have accomplished many tasks and reached many of your goals. The dissemination of results from your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* is an important stepping stone. Having a plan for how you are going to disseminate the results of the needs assessment, as well as your overall progress to date and next steps for implementing your service will help you in continuing to keep the community informed and involved. There are a number of questions that you can consider that will help you with the successful dissemination of the results of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. Some of these questions you will be familiar with, others less so.

#### Questions to consider in communicating the results of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*:

- Why do you want to communicate with the community/your stakeholders? (What is the purpose?);
- Who do you want/need to share the results with? (Who is your audience?);
- What do you want to communicate? (What is your message?);
- How do you want to communicate the results? (What resources are available and which ones do you wish to use?);
- What else do we need to consider? (What are the obstacles?).

#### Ways to share information:

- Written reports
- Presentations
- Press releases
- Newsletters
- Social media

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Answers to the questions listed on the previous page can be used to further develop your communication plan. In relation to your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*, answers to the following questions can assist you in effectively disseminating the most important results to your target audiences.

### *Who is your audience?*

**You will need** to identify the individual or the group or groups of individuals you wish to reach.

### *What is the purpose?*

**The type of information** that you share from your needs assessment will likely differ depending on who your audience is and what you are trying to accomplish? For example, the results that you present at a Town Hall meeting as an update to community members will differ from the results that you present to a funding organization.

### *What is your message?*

**The message** that you create will depend on your answers to questions #1 and #2 above. That is, the PowerPoint presentation that you develop to disseminate the findings from your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* at a Town Hall meeting most likely will be (and should be) different from the PowerPoint that you present to your mayor and town council. That is, because the *purpose* of each of your meetings will be different, the type of information presented, language used, and length of presentation also will be different.

### *What resources are available?*

**Dissemination of your findings** will depend on the resources that you have available. Full page ads in the local newspaper with identified highlights of the *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* is one method of disseminating your results but this method may require financial resources that are not available or that exceed your budget. You may be able to get the same type of coverage with a smaller ad combined with a local Town Hall meeting. Determining how much you have to spend and the staffing resources needed will assist you in developing an effective dissemination strategy.

### *What are the obstacles?*

**A well-thought out dissemination plan** can help you to avoid obstacles in communicating your findings. Knowing who is responsible for what, when it is to be done, where it takes place, and what is the follow-up needed in advance will help to minimize the number of things that can go astray in the dissemination of your findings.

## CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### *Should you connect with the media?*

**By now**, you will already have a good working relationship with the media in your community. Keeping the media informed on a regular basis of the work to date on your initiative and providing them with results of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* will assist in fostering and sustaining those relationships as well as increasing interest, involvement, and awareness of the project.

### *Creating your 'Communication Action Plan'*

**Information related** to each of the questions presented can be used to develop a Communication Action Plan for dissemination of the results from your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. Starting to plan early (while the data are being collected) will allow for maximum efficiency and effectiveness in the dissemination of the results from your *needs assessment*.

### *Evaluation*

**The final step** in your Communication Action Plan for dissemination of your findings from your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* is an evaluation of how well it was carried out and how well it worked. De-briefing with your staff/Committee/Board following the dissemination of the findings will help you to determine what worked and what didn't work. Receiving feedback from the community (e.g., use of comment forms provided at the Town Hall meeting, letters to the editor in the local newspaper, etc.) also can assist you in the overall effectiveness of the dissemination of your findings.

## IMPLEMENTING YOUR FINDINGS

**YOU ARE NOW POSITIONED** to make informed decisions about the development and implementation of an ATS service in your community. Specifically, the results of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* should be used hereon in by your group for making decisions on the different elements of your service and its implementation.

---

### ii. Benefits of a Needs Assessment

**BEFORE LEAVING THIS SECTION** of the *Toolkit*, we would like to again highlight the benefits of doing a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. The benefits include:

- Providing you with a greater understanding of the transportation needs of seniors in your community;
- Providing you with information on the *unmet* transportation needs of seniors in your community (and surrounding area);
- Facilitating the development and implementation of an ATS service that meets the needs of seniors in your community;
- Demonstrating your commitment to your target population, other stakeholders, and to the community at-large.

**THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*** was to provide you with the necessary information and tools for conducting a more formal assessment of the transportation needs of seniors in your community.

Before moving on to the next section on *Developing & Successfully Launching your Transportation Service*, you should have addressed the following:

- Identified the need for an ATS service in your community
- Generated the goals of your Community Transportation Needs Assessment
- Identified your target population
- Selected your methodology and collected the data
- Analyzed the data and generated a report
- Disseminated and implemented the findings







# 4



# DEVELOPING & SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE



**CONGRATULATIONS!** By now, you will have built a solid foundation for your ATS service by deciding on the organizational structure of your service, developing a Project Plan, and conducting a *Community Transportation Needs Assessment*. This phase of the development of your ATS service will present new opportunities for learning and growth. The information provided in this section will help you with the continued development and successful launch of your ATS service. As with the launch of any new business or service, there will be challenges, but with these challenges come rewards. One of the rewards in launching your ATS service is the tremendous sense of achievement that you and others will feel in helping the seniors in your community stay mobile.

---

## In this section, you will find information on:

- i. Selecting the Type of ATS Service and Determining how that Service will be Delivered
- ii. Operational Aspects of your ATS Service
- iii. Developing a Policy Manual for your ATS Service
- iv. Managing the Ongoing Day-To-Day Operations of your ATS Service
- v. Launching your ATS Service
- vi. Responding to Challenges

# DEVELOPING & LAUNCHING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

## i. Selecting the Type of ATS Service and Determining how that Service will be Delivered

**THE RESULTS** of your *Community Transportation Needs Assessment* can and should be used for making decisions on the type of ATS service to be implemented in your community and on the operational aspects of that service. There are a number of factors that will affect the type of ATS service that you implement in your community. You can think of these factors in terms of the five questions that we all learned in grade school: Who? What? Why? When? and Where? Two small additions (How? and How much?) help to round out the factors that you need to consider for making decisions on the type of ATS service to implement. Each of these seven factors is identified and discussed below.

### a. Who is the ATS service for?

Decide on eligibility criteria for who can use the ATS service (e.g., seniors, persons with disabilities, seniors *and* persons with disabilities, etc.).

### b. What can the ATS service be used for?

Decide on what transportation needs you wish to address (e.g., trips to medical appointments, for essential services such as getting groceries, trips for social activities, etc.). You also will need to determine what the regulatory requirements for providing your transportation service are. That is, there can be a lot of regulatory requirements,

depending on the transportation service you wish to provide. You will want to understand these requirements before committing to a particular service. After considering all regulatory requirements, some organizations/ service providers may choose a different transportation model or to contract out the service.

### c. Why are you launching the ATS service?

Decide on why you are launching this ATS service (e.g., to address an *identified* unmet need for seniors in your community/region).

### d. When will the ATS service operate?

Decide on the days of the week and what times of the day the ATS service will operate (e.g., Monday through Friday – daytime only; Monday through Friday – daytime and evening; etc.).

### e. Where will transportation be provided to?

Decide on your ATS service delivery area (e.g., in-town only, in-town as well as out-of-town locations, etc.).

### f. How will users pay for using the ATS service?

Decide on the method(s) through which users will be able to pay for the ATS service (e.g., pre-purchased vouchers, cash, invoicing, credit card payment, etc.).

**g. How much will they pay for the ATS service?**

Decide on the cost that users will pay for utilizing your service (e.g., a set amount for a one-way trip in-town; a set amount for a one-way trip out-of-town).

As discussed in Section 2, ATS services are best described and categorized by funding orientation (e.g., for-profit or non-profit) and how the service is delivered (e.g., method of service delivery). We are assuming, for the purposes of this *Toolkit*, that you have decided to either partner with an existing non-profit organization in your community or establish your own non-profit organization for the delivery of your ATS service. Your next major decision will be on *how* your ATS service is delivered. As noted in Section 2 of this *Toolkit*, ATS services, whether for-profit or non-profit, are provided most often via private vehicles, handivans, minivans, and buses (see Figure 2.1 – page 22). To assist you in making a decision on which method of service delivery you will use, we have provided information on each of the types below.

**PRIVATE VEHICLE**

**PRIVATE VEHICLES** are one way to provide rides to seniors in your community. From an organizational perspective (e.g., provision of ATS services), rides provided to seniors via a private vehicle can be done by paid or volunteer drivers. ATS service delivery using paid drivers consists of the driver using the organization’s vehicle(s) to deliver the service, with reimbursement done on a trip by trip basis

for part-time drivers or a monthly salary for full-time drivers. For volunteer drivers, ATS service delivery can take the form of volunteers using their own vehicles or the organization’s vehicle(s). In terms of reimbursement, volunteer drivers often are reimbursed for the costs of providing rides (e.g., gas, associated parking fees, mileage). Please refer to pages 70-73 of this *Toolkit* for more information on licensing requirements for paid and volunteer drivers, and on risk management and insurance for volunteer drivers. The Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council (ESCC) has developed an *Assisted Transportation Volunteer Driver Toolkit* to help in the planning, development, and audit of volunteer driver programs. There also is an accompanying 11 section binder of resources, entitled *Assisted Transportation Volunteer Driver Program, Volunteer Management Resources*, to support staff managing a volunteer driver program. For access to both documents, see [www.seniorscouncil.net/escc-published-reports](http://www.seniorscouncil.net/escc-published-reports).

An organization using private vehicles to transport medically at-risk persons should give consideration as to when certain people may not be able to use private vehicles. That is, people with medical issues may have problems accessing private vehicles and may also encounter problems with objects such as oxygen tanks (e.g., a regular private vehicle may not have a safe place to store a tank or other medical device while in-transit). Also, if the person being transported cannot wear a seatbelt for medical reasons, then the driver of a private vehicle must carry the person’s documentation authorizing them to not wear a seatbelt. The organization should

make considerations to ensure the necessary documents are given to the volunteer.

### *Providing a Passenger Transportation Service*

**Prior to providing** a passenger transportation service a person must fully understand all regulatory requirements. Legislation has been implemented across Canada to ensure persons operating a service do so in a safe manner. There are regulatory requirements that apply to the registered owner of the vehicle, drivers, and the vehicle itself. Please see pages 69 and 70 for more detailed information on Safety Fitness Certificates and Operating Authority Certificates.

### **HANDIBUS/HANDIVAN**

**IN ALBERTA**, a handibus is a type of a bus that is intended to transport persons with disabilities. A handibus must meet the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard D409-02. As background, in 1992, the CSA developed the D409 Safety Standard for vehicles transporting a wheelchair. The D409 Standard was updated in 2012 (*D409-02*).

The D409-02 Standard also can cover vans and other multi-purpose passenger vehicles. It is recommended anyone using these vehicles make their vehicle D409-02 compliant but it is not required within Alberta. The D409-02 Standard does not apply to passenger cars and these vehicles cannot conform to the D409-02 Standard requirements.

### **The D409-02 Standard specifies:**

- The design and manufacture of the vehicle, lifts, and ramps;
- The mobility aid location and securement;
- The required safety equipment.

Detailed information on the CSA D409-02 Standard is provided in a 66 page document entitled *CAN/CSA-D409-02 (R2012) – Motor Vehicles for the Transportation of Persons with Physical Disabilities*. This document is available for purchase at [www.shop.csa.ca/en/canada/accessibility/canca-d409-02-r2012/inv/27014802002](http://www.shop.csa.ca/en/canada/accessibility/canca-d409-02-r2012/inv/27014802002).

Of interest, the terms handibus and handivan often are used interchangeably. In this document, we have elected to use the term handibus to be consistent with the Alberta Standards. A handibus typically has a seating capacity of 10–14 passengers (depending on the model), and is equipped with features such as a lift or a ramp to secure persons in wheelchairs and to facilitate accessibility. As noted above, a handibus that is *designed and manufactured, or converted, and equipped for the purpose of transporting persons with physical disabilities* must meet the CSA D409-02 Standard.

## MINIVAN

**MINIVANS** also may be used in the provision of ATS services. Minivans are defined as multi-purpose passenger vehicles. Minivans can be modified to accommodate wheelchairs (see the previous section on the D409-02 Standard). Another option for getting minivans and other vehicles that do not need to comply with the D409-02 Standard modified for use with wheelchairs is the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA). Their website has information on vehicle modification and can be used to find Alberta contacts. For more information, see [www.nmeda.com/](http://www.nmeda.com/).

Any organization looking to use minivans or other vehicles that do not have to be D409-02 compliant may get useful information from local hospitals. Hospitals that specialize in rehabilitation may have contacts for getting vehicles modified to address mobility issues.

Alberta Transportation has developed an educational manual entitled *Commercial Vehicle Safety Compliance in Alberta* to assist new bus and truck carriers in understanding regulatory requirements. The manual can be viewed, printed, or downloaded at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/671.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/671.htm).

### SENIOR SENSITIVITY TRAINING

**YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER** offering senior sensitivity training to individuals in your organization. This type of training is designed to help your staff better understand the needs of seniors. Examples of many of the changes that occur with age in sensory, motor, and cognitive abilities are provided in Table 4-1. There also is information on what you can do to accommodate those changes, as well as things that you can do to 'simulate' a number of these age-related changes to help you to have a better understanding of the impact of these changes on everyday life.


For more information on senior sensitivity training, see [www.acaging.ca/senior-friendly](http://www.acaging.ca/senior-friendly).

**There are kits that you can purchase for your organization's senior sensitivity training.**

**These kits include:**

- A DVD and CD with five videos that walk you through the program;
- A virtual training manual with notes for those wanting to teach the program;
- Handouts that go along with exercises in the program. Plus, five individual kits with:
  - Glasses to simulate eye problems in older adults (e.g., glaucoma, macular degeneration, stroke, cataracts, and yellowing of the eye lens);
  - One pair of arthritis simulation gloves and a sewing kit (for the manual dexterity exercise);
  - A laminated number card;
  - Prescription bottle with 'pills'.

See [www.leememorial.org/shareclub/secure.asp](http://www.leememorial.org/shareclub/secure.asp).



**Senior sensitivity training will help your staff better understand the needs of seniors**



**Table 4-1.** *Age-Related Changes in Sensory, Motor, and Cognitive Abilities and Accommodating and Simulating the Changes*

Ability	Age-Related Change	What to Do	Simulating the Change
<b>Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Difficulty reading small print.</li> <li>● Difficulty seeing in dim light.</li> <li>● Difficulty adjusting to changes in light.</li> <li>● Increased sensitivity to glare.</li> <li>● Yellowing of lens in the eye.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the font size for directions, maps, information sheets, etc.</li> <li>● Print information on white paper using black font.</li> <li>● Avoid the use of glossy paper.</li> <li>● Increase in-vehicle lighting when picking up and dropping off.</li> <li>● Provide assistance in getting in and out of vehicles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wear tinted glasses to simulate vision loss.</li> <li>● Coat the inside lens of a pair of glasses with Vaseline to simulate cataracts.</li> </ul>
<b>Hearing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inability to hear high frequency sounds (affects the ability to understand what is being said).</li> <li>● Difficulty hearing in a noisy setting.</li> <li>● Difficulty hearing a telephone conversation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Face the person you are speaking to.</li> <li>● Speak louder but do not shout.</li> <li>● Re-phrase rather than repeating the same words over and over again if the person is having difficulty in hearing what is being said.</li> <li>● Minimize background noise (e.g., turn the radio off).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Place cotton balls in your ears or wear ear plugs to simulate hearing loss.</li> </ul>

*continued on page 64 ...*

Ability	Age-Related Change	What to Do	Simulating the Change
<b>Motor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Movement is slower.</li> <li>● Reduced flexibility.</li> <li>● Musculoskeletal conditions more common (e.g., arthritis in the joints in hands, knees, feet, etc.).</li> <li>● Fine motor coordination becomes more difficult.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow more time for entering and exiting vehicles.</li> <li>● Provide support for getting in and out of the vehicle.</li> <li>● Park closer to the curb.</li> <li>● Avoid icy locations for picking up and dropping off.</li> <li>● Provide ‘arm to arm’ transportation if needed.</li> <li>● Provide wider and thicker pens for writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Place rubber bands around hands to simulate the symptoms of arthritis.</li> <li>● Wear thick gloves to pick up a piece of paper or to get coins out of a change purse to simulate reductions in fine motor coordination.</li> </ul>
<b>Voice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Becomes ‘thinner’ with age (less volume and less projection).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Eliminate background noise in vehicle.</li> </ul>	---
<b>Touch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Decreased sensitivity to temperature changes.</li> <li>● Reduced sensitivity to pain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prevent overheating of vehicle or allowing the vehicle to become too cold.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wear gloves to simulate reductions in sensation.</li> </ul>

*continued on page 65...*

Ability	Age-Related Change	What to Do	Simulating the Change
<p><b>Cognitive</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cognitive impairment/dementia:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Difficulty with memory, reasoning ability, problem-solving, and/or language.</li> <li>→ Difficulty finding the right words.</li> <li>→ Losing 'train of thought'.</li> <li>→ Difficulty in organizing words logically.</li> <li>→ Using gestures rather than speaking.</li> <li>→ Changes in mood (e.g., suddenly becomes angry or confused).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Speak directly to the person.</li> <li>● Take time to listen.</li> <li>● Give the person time to respond.</li> <li>● Don't interrupt the person.</li> <li>● Ask the person if they are comfortable and pay attention to physical gestures or body language.</li> <li>● Do not leave the person alone or unattended.</li> <li>● Do not argue with the person.</li> </ul>	<p>---</p>

---

## ii. Operational Aspects of your ATS Service

### BOOKING/SCHEDULING RIDES

**YOU WILL WANT TO STRUCTURE** your ATS service so that it suits the needs of your community. There are different methods that you can use to book/schedule rides. The primary methods that are used for ATS service delivery are:

#### *Direct Booking by User*

**Direct booking by the user** can take a number of forms. That is, the user can contact the service provider directly via phone to schedule the ride; booking a ride by leaving a phone message; or making direct contact with the driver to schedule the ride. With direct booking through the service provider, there may be opportunities for immediate communication and, as such, can provide clarity in booking rides (e.g., Who? Where? When? etc.). However, direct booking is resource intensive in that it requires staffing and, as such, hours for booking are typically limited (e.g., Monday to Friday from 8 AM to 4 PM). This method of booking also requires clear communication between the staff member booking the ride and the rider, and between the staff member booking the ride and the driver. Booking also can be done by calling and leaving a message on a dedicated phone line. Although this method of booking is more cost effective, it can result in delays in receiving services and/or a delay or

absence of service due to time delays in picking up messages or because of miscommunication. The final form of direct booking is booking done through the driver. As with direct booking through dedicated office staff, this form of booking provides opportunities for immediate communication and clarity in booking rides. However, the availability of the driver cannot be guaranteed (e.g., giving rides in-town or out-of-town) and, as such, carries the disadvantage of possible delays in receiving services and/or the absence of service due to miscommunication.

#### *Online Booking*

**The introduction** of the World Wide Web (WWW) in the 1990's has revolutionized the way we communicate and the way we do business. Because the WWW operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, both for-profit and non-profit organizations have the ability to promote and take bookings for their services at any time of the day or night. Although a lower percentage of seniors use the internet, as compared to other age groups in the population, seniors have the highest *growth rate* of internet use.<sup>13</sup> In a 2012 survey of internet use in Canada, almost half (46%) of seniors 65 years of age and older used the internet from home, with 70% of the seniors who used the internet indicating that they used it every day.<sup>14</sup> As such, in planning your ATS service, it will be important to *not assume* that seniors will not or cannot book a

ride online. In addition, for those seniors who have not embraced the internet, the presence of adult children, grandchildren, and/or friends and neighbours enables the booking of ATS services online. Online booking of ATS services is associated with time and cost savings in that bookings are done automatically, and the booking can be done at any time (24/7). If you are interested in exploring online booking for your ATS service, a good starting point may be your 'town' and/or municipal office in that they are likely to have someone with IT expertise. Your local library or library system services within your region also may be able to offer guidance in this area (see [www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/library\\_systems](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/library_systems)).

### *Ride-Scheduling Software*

**Ride-scheduling software**, which is often web-based, allows organizations to book, schedule, and manage rides. Ride-scheduling software creates: 1) efficiencies in booking/scheduling rides; 2) improvements in service delivery; 3) more efficient routing and/or scheduling of vehicles and drivers leading to

improvements in productivity and on-time performance, which can have beneficial impacts on overall operating costs; 4) enhancements in communication between vehicles/drivers and the organization's 'dispatching' centre; 5) reductions in paperwork and related administrative tasks, and/or; 6) gains in quality of service and passenger satisfaction. In 2014, researchers from MARD interviewed 11 ride-scheduling software companies. Results of those interviews indicated that there were many similarities in features such as Client Payment Invoicing; Driver Reimbursement Statements; Reporting and Statistics; Training and Support; and Privacy and Security.<sup>15</sup> There also were similarities in terms of costs. Based on the interviews, it was evident that all of the ride-scheduling software programs are easily configurable and customizable. Please see [www.mard.ualberta.ca/Resources/ResourcesForATSProviders.aspx](http://www.mard.ualberta.ca/Resources/ResourcesForATSProviders.aspx) for more information.

### VEHICLE STORAGE, MAINTENANCE, AND SAFETY INSPECTIONS

#### *Vehicle Storage and Maintenance*

**Vehicles are an important component** of your service. For organizations using commercial vehicles (e.g., handibus), in addition to purchasing costs, the storage and maintenance of your vehicle(s) will need to be addressed. In terms of storage of your vehicle when it is not in use, one option is to partner with a local senior's centre or a business in your community that has parking that you can access. The availability of a dedicated parking location, and particularly the availability of parking facilities that are covered or underground, can eliminate many storage and safety concerns. Another option is for the driver to park the vehicle at their home. Although this eliminates the need for travel time for the driver, it may present parking or storage difficulties. If you are able to secure parking at no cost through partnership with another community organization or business, you will want to record this as an in-kind contribution in your annual financial records.

Vehicle maintenance also is an important consideration, and the type and frequency of vehicle maintenance that is needed will depend on the type of vehicle(s) used to deliver your ATS service. If your service utilizes volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles, it is advisable to set minimum maintenance standards for the vehicles used to transport your clients.

#### *Vehicle Inspections*

##### **For organizations utilizing volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles:**

- Ensure that the vehicle is fit to travel in. This may include a vehicle inspection to guarantee that the vehicle is safe and in good working order. A *Request for Vehicle Inspection* form can be found at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/2824.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2824.htm) and a list of vehicle inspection facilities is available at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/685.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/685.htm).
- Vehicle inspections in Alberta are provided by the private sector. For fees associated with vehicle inspections, you may wish to contact and receive quotes from one or more of the inspection facilities in your region.
- Verify that all required warranty and maintenance service have been completed, and retain a copy of all service records in a file.

##### **For organizations using their own commercial vehicle (e.g., handibus):**

- For organizations using commercial vehicles, it is important to note that there are set standards for maintenance *and* inspection of commercial vehicles, as well as maintenance, distribution, and retention of reports (see Alberta Traffic Safety Act [www.canlii.org/en/ab/laws/regu/alta-reg-121-2009/latest/alta-reg-121-2009.html#sec6\\_smooth](http://www.canlii.org/en/ab/laws/regu/alta-reg-121-2009/latest/alta-reg-121-2009.html#sec6_smooth)).

- Alberta Transportation has a comprehensive resource called the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Compliance in Alberta* on their webpage at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/671.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/671.htm). This webpage contains useful information on topics pertaining to operating and maintaining a commercial vehicle (e.g., licensing, registration, insurance, etc.).
- In Alberta, Carrier Services monitors, controls, and issues safety permits for commercial carriers. For information related to regulations for commercial carriers, you can contact Carrier Services at 403-340-5444 and ask to speak to an advisor who can guide you through the process associated with these regulations. To call toll free within Alberta, first dial 310-0000.

### *Safety Fitness Certificate*

**In Alberta**, any vehicle operated by a registered community service group, designed for 11 or more passengers (including the driver), is first required to gain a Safety Fitness Certificate. This certificate ensures that any vehicle operated by the organization is compliant with the safety standards published by the National Safety Program. The National Safety Program is a program aimed at improving road safety throughout Canada.

### **Other regulatory requirements that apply include:**

- Implementing written safety and maintenance programs that meet regulatory requirements;
- Maintaining driver and vehicle records;
- Compliance to driver hours of service regulations;
- Compliance to vehicle inspection requirements (daily trip inspections and semi-annual inspections conducted at a government certified inspection facility);
- Providing adequate driver training;
- Maintaining additional Passenger Hazard insurance (6C endorsement).

More information about Safety Fitness Certificate requirements and application forms may be viewed at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm).

### *Operating Authority Certificate*

**In Alberta**, passenger transportation services may require an Operating Authority Certificate (OAC). Transportation services requiring an OAC may include charter, scheduled service, private, industrial, or non-profit bus operations. Note that a commercial vehicle does not require an OAC to transport passengers when designed by the manufacturer with a seating capacity of 15 or fewer passengers, including the driver, and operated as a taxi that provides on-demand service (see [www.transportation.alberta.ca/663.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/663.htm)). The type of service provided will determine what kind of

certificate the person must obtain. More information about OACs and OAC application forms may be viewed at [www.transportation.alberta.ca/5612.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/5612.htm).

For more information on transportation compliance in Alberta, see [www.amta.ca/COR/PDF/Transportation+Compliance+in+Alberta.pdf](http://www.amta.ca/COR/PDF/Transportation+Compliance+in+Alberta.pdf).

### LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

**THE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS** for your ATS service are dependent on the method of service delivery and type of driver your organization chooses.

- **Volunteer Drivers:** A Class 4 driver's licence is NOT required when the vehicle owner or operator or the operator's employer drives a private passenger vehicle for the transportation of passengers on an incidental or occasional basis and receives compensation for:
  - Payment for the kilometers travelled, or;
  - Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses directly related to the transportation (e.g., gas, parking, gate passes, etc.).
- **Paid Drivers:** A Class 4 driver's licence is required when the vehicle owner or operator, or the operator's employer, is being paid for the service that the vehicle provides. This means if your ATS service operates a handibus and has a paid driver, the driver is required to have a Class 4 driver's licence. A person who applies for, or renews, a Class 4 driver's licence must provide a completed Medical

Examination for Motor Vehicle Operators form. This will be required every five years until the age of 45, then every two years after until the age of 65, and annually thereafter.

For more information on policies related to licensing requirements, see [www.transportation.alberta.ca/1828.htm](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/1828.htm) and [www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType276/Production/Module3.pdf](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType276/Production/Module3.pdf).

### RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

**RISK MANAGEMENT** refers to the practice of identifying potential risks in advance, analyzing those risks, and taking precautionary steps to reduce or to curb the risk. You will want to take a proactive approach to your organization's operations and seek to avoid or reduce risks and losses in the first place.

If your organization has a paid driver who provides door-through-door or arm-to-arm service, it is important that you notify your insurance company of these activities and ensure that you have the appropriate coverage.

Your organization also will need Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) coverage for both volunteer and paid drivers. For more information about the WCB, please see [www.wcb.ab.ca/](http://www.wcb.ab.ca/).

The Alberta Voluntary Sector Insurance Council has produced a valuable resource on the common types of insurance coverage for non-profits and charities, on how to assess your organization's insurance needs, how to choose a broker or an agent, how to manage your insurance program, and how to work with your Board (or other organizational structure) on insurance issues.



There also is a glossary of common insurance terms and references for more information. In addition, the *Volunteer Sector Insurance Toolkit* also has checklists, templates, and other resources. The *Volunteer Sector Insurance Toolkit* is available at no cost (see [www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/documents/Insurance\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/documents/Insurance_Toolkit.pdf)).

As noted in the *Volunteer Sector Insurance Toolkit*, “buying insurance is only a small part of risk management” (p. 18). An overview of the risk management process, a checklist to

assist you in taking stock of your risks, and references to other risk management resources are provided on page 19 of this *Volunteer Sector Insurance Toolkit*.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada has developed a handout that provides information about insurance for volunteer drivers and community organizations that provide transportation. That handout is provided below. For copies of the handout, please contact MARD (see [www.mard.ualberta.ca/](http://www.mard.ualberta.ca/)) or IBC (see [www.ibc.ca/](http://www.ibc.ca/)).

## Insurance Information for Volunteer Drivers and Community-based Organizations Providing Transportation

IBC  BAC



Whether you're a volunteer driver using your own personal vehicle or run a community-based, not-for-profit organization with volunteer drivers, **here's what you need to know:**

- If you're a volunteer driver, you won't need additional insurance even if you're reimbursed for driving expenses such as mileage or "wear and tear". Being a volunteer driver isn't the same as transporting paying passengers.
- Your insurance premiums or coverage shouldn't be affected as a volunteer driver but it's best to let your insurance provider know of your activities.
- You're not required to increase your liability coverage as a volunteer driver but you must have the minimum liability limit as outlined by your province of residence.
- In the event of a collision while volunteer driving, you're responsible for paying your deductible, based on the insurance coverage you have.
- Your voluntary or not-for-profit organization requires commercial insurance much like any business. In this case, it's about covering risk, not protecting assets. *Non-owned automobile insurance* is an insurance endorsement highly recommended for organizations with volunteer drivers.
- It's recommended that your voluntary or not-for-profit organization request a driver's abstract (driving record) as part of its volunteer driver application process. If an applicant's abstract shows multiple convictions and/or demerit points, he/she may not be the appropriate driver for your organization.
- To get the best possible rate and coverage for your voluntary or not-for-profit organization's needs, make every effort to achieve a "best-in-class" status with your insurance provider. This includes creating a risk management plan, cultivating a relationship with your insurance provider, and ensuring all documentation submitted is organized, referenced and labelled.

To assist you with specific questions that you may have, we have prepared a handout with a list of questions and answers, in partnership

with the Insurance Bureau of Canada, entitled Automotive & Liability Insurance for Volunteer Organizations.



### Automotive & Liability Insurance for Volunteer Organizations

**One of our volunteer drivers got in an accident with their own car (fault not yet determined).**

*With respect to insurance, now what?*

Make sure the volunteer driver reports the Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) to their insurer.

*With respect to insurance, what do we do?*

Set up an incident report so you know what happened. You should include any injuries to clients.

*With respect to insurance, what do they do?*

Make sure the volunteer driver files an AB-1 under the driver's insurance contract within 10 days of the MVA. An AB-1 is a Notice of Loss and Proof of Claim form (see [www.finance.alberta.ca/publications/insurance/forms/ab-1.pdf](http://www.finance.alberta.ca/publications/insurance/forms/ab-1.pdf)).

**One of our volunteer drivers got in an accident with *our* car (fault not yet determined).**

*With respect to insurance, now what?*

Report the MVA to your insurer.

*With respect to insurance, what do we do?*

Keep an incident report including injuries to the driver and passenger. Make sure the driver and passenger file an AB-1 report to your insurance company within 10 days of the MVA.

**How much liability does our organization need with Non-Owned Automobile insurance? Why is Non-Owned Automobile insurance important to have?**

Most insurers will sell only \$1 or \$2 million liability limits for Non-Owned Automobile insurance. Non-owned Automobile insurance protects the volunteer organization in case a volunteer driver's policy liability limit proves inadequate to cover the loss sustained or the volunteer's policy is not in force at the time of the MVA.

**What is the minimum Commercial General Liability limit that an organization needs?**

There is no legal requirement to carry a Commercial General Liability policy but there may be contractual arrangements that require the organization to carry a \$1, \$2, or \$5 million. The minimum limit an insurer will sell is \$1 million.

*continued on page 73...*



**Automotive & Liability Insurance for Volunteer Organizations**

**What is umbrella liability?  
Does our organization need it?**

In essence, umbrella liability is an excess policy. If the loss exceeds the Commercial General Liability or Non-owned Automobile insurance limit, this policy picks up the difference subject to the Umbrella limit. Umbrella liability is a way to increase the limits on the primary policies by \$1, \$2, or \$5 million without a lot of difficulty. Most automobile policies are written for \$1 or \$2 million and this is a way to get the higher limits if needed.

**How much umbrella liability does an organization need? Why is this important to have?**

The amount of umbrella liability depends on what the organization feels provides them with adequate limits in case of a disaster whether that be covered under the Commercial General Liability or the Non-Owned Automobile insurance policy. It is important to protect the organization in case of a large loss involving more than one person.

**If an organization has a Policy/Best Practices manual in place for volunteer drivers, will this lessen the organization's insurance costs?**

It may or it may not reduce insurance costs but what such documents show is that the organization is mindful of managing their risks which in turn may make it easier to obtain insurance coverages. It also may be an attractive selling point to those individuals that provide the funding to the organization.

**With volunteer drivers and a driver's abstract, what is considered an acceptable demerit point limit for the volunteer driver? If a volunteer driver has demerit points, what can they do?**

Three minor convictions usually would be six demerit points which would be a reasonable cut-off point for demerit point limits. The other thing to look at is the frequency of the demerits. Are they spread out over three years or are they all accumulated within a short period of time? Typically, there are driver improvement courses available that the volunteer driver can take which will give him/her a credit on the motor driver record (also known as the motor vehicle record/MVR).

---

### iii. Developing a Policy Manual for your ATS Service

A **POLICY MANUAL** is “a collection of documents that define an organization’s rules, policies and procedures, and helps staff and management run the business” (see [www.ehow.com/facts\\_6190577\\_policy-manuals\\_.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_6190577_policy-manuals_.html)).<sup>16</sup>

A **policy** is a plan or course of action, of a government, political party or business which is intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters. **Procedures**, on the other hand, are the specific methods used to implement policies into action in the day-to-day operations of an organization. Together, policies and procedures are your ‘recipe for success’ in that they can and should be used to inform on and influence all major decisions, activities, and actions that take place in your organization.

#### **Elements that you will want to include in the development of your Policy Manual are:**

- Organization culture and policies;
- Role of procedures and forms;
- Workplace guidelines;
- Employment policies, status, and records;
- Employee payroll and benefits;
- Employee conduct.

The Policy Manual should contain the vision, mission, objectives, and other elements of your ATS service (e.g., how rides are provided, when they are provided, who provides them). The Policy Manual also will include all of the policies that govern your ATS service. For example, policies should address issues related to safety and liability, waiting times, payment of fees, as well as policies related to unusual circumstances (e.g., changes in regular service delivery during poor weather conditions). The Policy Manual should contain information relevant to Committee/Board members and any employees (e.g., hiring practices, background checks, performance reviews, orientation of new employees, confidentiality, workplace guidelines, employee conduct, etc.). The Policy Manual also needs to include policies related to vehicle maintenance, mileage records, safety protocols, service protocols, insurance information, and other regulatory documents. If the development of a Policy Manual is a relatively new experience for you and your Committee/Board, there are excellent resources available online at [www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/staff-management/policies-and-practices](http://www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/staff-management/policies-and-practices).

The link on the previous page provides information on general management standards including a policy framework and employment legislation; managing people and their work; learning, training, and development; getting the right people; workplaces that work; and human resources training. Links to sample interview

questions, sample questions for references, and sample Letters of Offer also are available on this website.

A self-evaluation form also is available. An example of the self-evaluation form is provided below.

**Self-Evaluation Form**

<b>HR Management Standards</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Fully Meets</b>
<p><i>Managing People and Their Work</i></p> <p>All new employees are oriented to the position and to the organization.</p> <p>The performance of each employee is fairly assessed, at least annually, at the end of the work plan or performance period.</p> <p>The organization has methods to address employee performance issues or concerns.</p> <p>The organization provides competitive compensation to employees.</p>				

---

#### iv. Managing the Ongoing Day-to-Day Operations of your ATS Service

**MANAGING THE ONGOING DAY-TO-DAY** operations of your ATS service will require some planning and the development of a Management Plan. The Management Plan that you develop should be consistent with the vision and mission of your organization.

**Aspects to consider in the development of your Management Plan are:**

- Does the management model/system that you have chosen fit with your organization and will it help you to accomplish your goals?
- Do your policies and procedures cover the following five areas: People, money, equipment and supplies, activities, and your relations with the outside world?

- Does the relationship between your Committee/Board, staff, and volunteers conform to the management model/system that you have chosen?
- Do you have an established system and schedule for evaluating and making revisions to your Management Plan so that it continues to function effectively?

---

## v. Launching your ATS Service

**WHEN LAUNCHING YOUR ATS SERVICE**, your organization will want to engage the community and maximize the visibility of the ATS service. Holding an Open House is a great way to launch your ATS service in that it allows members of your community to find out more about your service and to celebrate with you in your success. By now, you have developed good relationships with the media in your community. This is important in that the media can and should be involved in advertising the launch of your service. Creating posters also is a good way to promote your Open House and the launch of your ATS service. Placement of posters in regularly attended establishments in your community such as grocery stores, pharmacies, doctors' offices, churches, the Town Hall, or at community centres will help you maximize your reach to your target audience, your community partners, and to the community overall. Creating a logo for your ATS service helps you in creating a visual identity for your business, and can be used to promote brand recognition and awareness.

To maximize the effectiveness of your Open House event, plan it on a day and in a venue that is typically convenient for your community (e.g., the middle of the week). All members of your Committee/Board and other individuals associated with your ATS service (e.g., the driver[s] of your vehicle[s], service coordinator, any volunteers associated with your initiative) should be present at this event. Be sure to invite your local MLA, your mayor and council members, and other dignitaries to the Open House and arrange for media coverage of the ribbon cutting ceremony to officially launch your ATS service. You also will want to invite the local business community and other stakeholders you have worked with or wish to collaborate with in the future.

Following your Open House, ongoing promotional activities can include a booth or a table at community events (e.g., fall fairs, stampedes, and other seasonal festivities or events). Having your vehicle(s) and operator/driver(s) at these events can help to personalize the service by allowing you to showcase the attributes of the vehicle (e.g., wheelchair accessibility, ramps, cleanliness, etc.) and by allowing individuals from the community to become acquainted with the driver. If you are using volunteer drivers, you may want to have decals made up for their vehicles and invite one or more of your volunteer drivers to participate in community events showcasing your service.

Other promotional activities could include distribution of brochures/handouts at the senior's center, in medical clinics, pharmacies, and at grocery stores. Refrigerator magnets with your logo and phone number for booking rides can be effective way to increase awareness and utilization of your ATS service. Following the Open House, be sure to send letters or cards of gratitude to the dignitaries, community leaders, and other stakeholders including the media to acknowledge their attendance and recognize the value that their presence added to the event.

Developing a website also can help maximize the visibility of your ATS service. If you elect to launch a website, it is important that your website is attractive, well-written, and easy to use.

Information on how a website can assist in fundraising efforts is provided in Section 6 of this *Toolkit*.



---

## vi. Responding to Challenges

**FOLLOWING THE LAUNCH** of your ATS service, you will need to continue to monitor the day-to-day operations of the service to ensure that service provision is running smoothly. Encountering unforeseen situations is not uncommon in the first few weeks of launching any new business or service. Obtaining feedback from the users of your ATS service is always important and particularly so in the first few weeks when little ‘idiosyncrasies’ may occur. Having your operator/driver(s) make note(s) of any issue(s) and communicating them to you and your Committee/Board is critical. It also would be prudent to have users complete a short ‘customer feedback’ form on their satisfaction with the service (please refer to page 82 for more information about this). Finally, consider scheduling a Committee/Board meeting within one month of launching your ATS service. This allows you to discuss what has worked well and what aspects of the service need attending to. Any additions or changes to the policies and procedures need to be recorded, with updates made to the Policy Manual.

Now that your ATS service has been successfully launched, you will need to continue with your promotional efforts with the goal of increasing ridership. That is, promoting your service on an ongoing basis is key to developing a *sustainable* ATS service. More information on the sustainability of your service is provided in the *Building a Sustainable Transportation Service* section of this *Toolkit*.

**THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*** was to provide you with the necessary information on developing and successfully launching your ATS service. Before moving to the next section on *Receiving Feedback & Evaluating your Transportation Service*, you should have addressed the following:

- Selected the type of ATS service and determined how that service will be delivered
- Decided on the operational aspects of your ATS service
- Developed a Policy Manual for your ATS service
- Addressed the management of ongoing day-to-day operations of your ATS service
- Launched your ATS service
- Responded to challenges





# 5



# RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE



**THE SUCCESS OF ANY ATS SERVICE** relies on its ability to meet the needs of its users. It is essential that methods to receive feedback from your users and to evaluate the performance of your ATS service are in place from the time you launch your service. The measures that your ATS service uses for feedback and evaluation should be linked to your organization's vision, mission, and objectives that were established early on in the development of your service. User feedback is essential in that it will inform you about the strengths and weaknesses of your ATS service. Implementing changes based on user feedback and communicating these changes to users and other stakeholders in your community also is an opportunity for reinforcing stakeholder engagement and ongoing partnerships.

---

## In this section, you will find information on:

- i. Receiving Feedback
- ii. Formally Evaluating your ATS Service
- iii. Learning from Feedback and Evaluation
- iv. Communicating Outcomes

There are two parts to evaluating your ATS service. The first is receiving feedback from the users of your transportation service as well as your operator/driver(s), with the second focused on conducting a more formal evaluation. User and operator/driver(s) feedback should be an ongoing component of your service, whereas a formal evaluation can be conducted less frequently (e.g., after the first six months and then once every year thereafter).

# RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING *YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

## i. Receiving Feedback

**RECEIVING FEEDBACK** from your users and operator/driver(s) is extremely valuable because, most often, they will tell you what matters to them and how to improve service provision. Feedback helps guide decision-making related to your ATS service by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of service provision. Feedback also allows your organization to make adjustments to the service to better meet your users' needs. Finally, feedback helps you to identify unmet user needs.

There are different ways to receive user feedback. Methods can be as simple as completion of an anonymous comment card. More complex methods include having users complete a formal questionnaire or holding a focus group. The advantage of using a more structured feedback method such as a formal questionnaire is that it provides a record of the evaluation that can be further analyzed. This analysis may provide data that can be shared with users and donors to keep them engaged in the service. If you choose to implement comment cards as a method of collecting user feedback, it is a good idea to keep them brief and easy to complete (yes/no responses or simple rating scales). This is because users are more likely to provide feedback if the comment cards are short and simple. It also will be important to ensure anonymity, particularly if there is negative feedback on your service. One method that can be used to facilitate user feedback and to ensure anonymity is to have a

locked comment card box in the vehicle or in designated locations within the community, with the locked box emptied every week. Irrespective of the method you use for collecting feedback, it is important that you have questions that pertain to the vision, mission, and objectives of your ATS service.

Please respond about your trip today		Yes	No
When you scheduled your ride was the person on the telephone courteous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Were you picked up on time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Did you arrive at your destination on time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Was the ride comfortable?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Did you feel safe in the vehicle?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Was the vehicle clean?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Did the driver request you to wear a seatbelt?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Was the driver courteous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Please rate the following from your trip today	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
How was the service today?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, the service was:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please tell us how we can improve the service.

.....

.....

## RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING *YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

Being at the forefront of the operations of your ATS service, operator/driver(s) can provide valuable feedback on improving and creating efficiencies in service delivery. As such, it is important to collect feedback from the vehicle operator/driver(s) about the service. There are four main areas in which the operator/driver(s) of your ATS service can provide essential feedback. Those areas and some questions that you can ask your operator/driver(s) are as follows:

### a. Booking rides

- Are the users who booked the rides available for pick up at the time of pick up?
- Are the users on time (e.g., for pick up and/or for the return ride home)?
- Do the users meet the criteria set out in the Policy Manual?

### b. Scheduling rides

- Are the rides scheduled in a way that you are able to pick up users on time?
- Are the rides scheduled in a way that you are able to drop off users on time?
- How long is the waiting time between trips?

### c. Operation

- Are the scheduled hours of operation meeting the needs of the users on weekdays? On weekends?

- Are there *days* of the week that users want rides that are outside scheduled service hours? If yes, how many and what are the days?
- Are there *times* of the day that users want rides that are outside scheduled service hours? If yes, how many and what are the times?

### d. Satisfaction

- How satisfied are you with your role as driver for our ATS service ('Not at all satisfied' to 'Very satisfied')? If unsatisfied, what can be done to increase your satisfaction?
- How satisfied are you with your current workload ('Not at all satisfied' to 'Very satisfied')? If unsatisfied, what can be done to increase your satisfaction?
- Are there aspects of your job that you would like to have more training in? If yes, what are those areas?
- Based on your experiences as a driver for our ATS service, is there anything that you would like to change about the transportation service?

In addition to these evaluations, you also can encourage users and your operator/driver(s) to communicate directly with your organization via phone calls, letters, or emails. When collecting feedback of any form, you will need to assure respondents that their feedback will be handled confidentially.

---

## ii. Formally Evaluating your ATS Service

**REGULAR EVALUATION** of your ATS service provision is essential as it is the primary means of making you aware of the strengths and gaps in your service. That is, knowing that you are ‘making a difference in the lives of seniors’ will be very rewarding and is information that you can share with your stakeholders and with the community at-large. Knowing that there are aspects of your service that are not meeting the needs of the seniors in your community or that there are gaps in your service can help you to adapt and/or enhance your services to best suit the needs of your users.

In addition to the informal feedback that has been discussed, you will want to and should carry out a formal evaluation of your ATS service on a regular basis. A formal evaluation is defined as “the systematic collection and analysis of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming.”<sup>17</sup>

**Questions that you will want to include in your formal evaluation are:**

**a. What will be evaluated?**

Explicitly state that your program (name of ATS service) and the service it provides (your mission statement) is what is being evaluated.

**b. What criteria will be used to evaluate the ‘performance’ of your ATS service?**

Criteria that should be included are:

- How many people are using your service?
- What are people using the service for (e.g., attending medical appointments, accessing ‘essential’ services [such as grocery shopping and banking], attending social functions, religious activities)?
- What days of the week are people using the service (i.e., weekdays, weekends, or both)?
- What times of the day are people using the service (i.e., morning, afternoon, evening)?
- Are users satisfied with how they are booking the trip (e.g., online reservation, central booking by phone, or calling the driver directly)?



## RECEIVING FEEDBACK & EVALUATING *YOUR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

- What type of trips are users making (e.g., single destination, point-to-point, or multiple destinations)?
- How far are people traveling when using your ATS service (i.e., within the community, between towns, to major urban areas)?
- Does your ATS service vehicle(s) meet the needs of your users?
- Overall, how satisfied are the users of your ATS service?
- How satisfied are users with the cost of your ATS service?
- How satisfied are users with the method of payment for your ATS service (e.g., pre-paid vouchers, monthly passes, invoicing, etc.)?
- How satisfied are the drivers of your ATS service?

**c. What is the level of performance or standard of performance that is needed in order for you to consider your program a success?**

Prior to conducting your formal evaluation, you will need to define what parameters or value you will use to consider your program a success (e.g., number of seniors using your service per month; the percentage of rides for medical appointments, for essential services, etc.; percentage of users using the service on weekdays; percentage of users using the service on weekends; satisfaction ratings of 'Very good' to 'Excellent'; etc.).

**d. What information/data will you use as evidence that you have met the level of performance or standard of performance for your program's success?**

This step involves identifying the source of your information/data to assess the level/standard of performance of your service (e.g., internal data inform on the number of seniors using your service; results generated from the ride-scheduling software; percentage of rides per trip type; externally administered survey on satisfaction with service; etc.). Note that letters, emails, or other sources of feedback that commend your service can be incorporated into this formal evaluation.

**e. Are your conclusions about the success of your program justified by the evidence garnered?**

Are your conclusions supported by data from both internal and external sources?

---

### iii. Learning from Feedback and Evaluation

**REVIEWING AND ACTING** on the feedback from the formal evaluation can and should be used to improve your service. Concerns can be discussed with your Committee/Board and changes can be made to improve your service. Sharing positive feedback with your Committee/Board also is important in that this feedback can highlight the areas where your ATS service is doing well. Finally, regular evaluation also will allow you and your organization to revise benchmarks or set new benchmarks that will allow for improvement in future service delivery.

---

## iv. Communicating Outcomes

**THE INFORMATION** that you have obtained from your informal and formal evaluations can and should be disseminated to your users and the community at-large. In addition to showcasing the positives, it also is important to let respondents and the general community know of any actions that you are taking or plan on taking to address concerns with your service. There are a number of methods you can use to communicate the findings from your informal and formal evaluation.

**These methods include:**

- Articles in the local newspaper or interviews on the local radio and television stations highlighting the positives and any service changes that address concerns;
- Holding a Town Hall meeting;
- Posting the findings on your website.

Results from informal and formal evaluations ultimately provide information about the viability and sustainability of your ATS service.

**THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*** was to provide you with information on collecting feedback from the users and operator/driver(s) of your ATS service. Before moving on to the next section on *Building a Sustainable Transportation Service*, you should have addressed the following:

- ❑ Developed informal and formal methods to collect feedback from your users
- ❑ Collected and analyzed the results from these informal and formal methods of evaluation
- ❑ Acted on the feedback from both informal and formal evaluations
- ❑ Developed a communication plan for dissemination of your results and actions taken, and communicated the results and actions taken to your stakeholders







# BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE



**DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING** your ATS service has taken a lot of hard work and you and your organization have seen the benefits of your service not only for seniors in the community but also for the community at-large. Now that the foundation is laid, you can turn your attention to putting the pieces in place that will help with sustaining your service into the future.

Financial and organizational stability both are key to a lasting ATS service in your community. Having a plan is critical for meeting the goal of long-term financial and organizational sustainability. You may recall from Section 2 that an Action Plan describes the strategies that are needed if you are to accomplish your objective of ensuring the long-term sustainability of your ATS service. You also may recall from Section 2 that an Action Plan consists of action steps. These action steps include:

- a. What will happen** (e.g., What <action> will occur or what <actions> are needed for financial sustainability?).
- b. Who will do what** (e.g., Who will do <action> to assist your organization in achieving financial sustainability?).

- c. The date to be completed** (e.g., By when will <action> take place in order to achieve financial sustainability?).
- d. The resources needed** (e.g., What resources are needed for <action> in order to achieve financial sustainability?).
- e. The support that is needed** (e.g., Who/what is needed for <action> in order to achieve financial sustainability?).

---

## In this section, you will find information on:

- i.** Fundraising
- ii.** Marketing Strategies
- iii.** Fostering Collaborations and Partnerships
- iv.** Promoting Community Engagement and Leadership
- v.** Ensuring Organizational Stability
- vi.** Conducting an Internal Review

# BUILDING A *SUSTAINABLE* TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

An ATS service is sustainable if the funding available and revenue collected in delivering the service meets the costs involved in operating the service. There are a number

of ways that you can achieve financial sustainability. An overview of the ways in which that you can achieve financial stability is listed below.

---

## i. Fundraising

**FUNDRAISING** is central to the ongoing financial sustainability of your ATS service as it is most likely the major source of funding for the continued operation of your service. There are many aspects to consider when planning for fundraising, such as how much money is required, who the target audience will be, and how to actually acquire donations (i.e., through events, campaigns, online). There also are a number of methods you can use for funding your ATS service. These include charging for your service, applying for grant funding, securing sponsorships, and engaging in fundraising activities. Information on each of these methods is provided in this section of the *Toolkit*.

### FUNDRAISING SOURCES

#### *Fee for Service*

**Charging for ATS service provision** is one way to help you with the financial sustainability of your service. Of interest, based on results from provincial and regional transportation needs assessments, many ATS service providers

have the perception that ATS services should be available at no cost to the user. On average, it costs \$12,000 per year to own and operate a mid-sized vehicle in Canada.<sup>18</sup> Thus, for those seniors no longer able to drive, the costs for operating a vehicle could be allocated to paying for ATS services. For example, individuals could take even a fraction of the amount that it costs to own and operate a vehicle (e.g., \$3,000) and put it in a special bank account (their *Mobility Account*) and use those dollars to pay for ATS services. Family members also could contribute to this *Mobility Account* on special occasions (Birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.). Furthermore, results of surveys with seniors indicate that the vast majority of seniors are willing and can afford to pay for these services.<sup>19,20</sup> Typically, responses indicate that seniors can *afford to* and are *willing to* pay about \$10 for a one-way 10 km ride.



### *Grant Applications*

**Grant funding** can help with the financial sustainability of your service. Unfortunately, there are only a few sources of grant funding available for funding your ATS service. Potential granting agencies for funding include:

- The Community Initiatives Program (CIP)  
The CIP is a provincial fund that is directed towards re-investing money in community-based projects throughout the province. There are three categories of CIP funding, two of which your organization may be eligible for – Project-Based Grants and Community Operating Grants. The type of funding you apply for will depend on what specific activities the funds are intended for. For example, purchasing a handibus would be eligible for the Project-Based Grant, while operation costs and wages would fall under Community Operating Grants. Each of these two Grants has a maximum contribution of \$75,000 per year, however your organization must provide matching funds. For more information and to apply, visit the CIP website at [www.culture.alberta.ca/community/community-grants/community-initiatives-program/](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/community/community-grants/community-initiatives-program/).
- The New Horizons for Seniors Program  
The New Horizons for Seniors Program is a federal grant that provides funding for projects that engage and support the participation of seniors in the community. Community-based projects can receive up to \$25,000 per year. To find out more details on this program and to apply, visit the New Horizons for Seniors website at [www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/community/index.shtml](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/community/index.shtml).

- The UFA Rural From the Roots Up – Get ‘n’ Give Contest

The UFA Rural From the Roots Up – Get ‘n’ Give Contest is aimed at supporting and enriching rural Alberta communities. The value of the contest is \$50,000. For more information and to apply, visit the Get ‘n’ Give website at [www.getngiveufa.com/](http://www.getngiveufa.com/).

- The Alberta Community Partnership Program  
The Alberta Community Partnership is a program that provides funding to municipalities in Alberta in order to improve sustainability of communities and strengthen inter-municipal relations. To find out more about the program and to apply, you can go to the Alberta Community Partnership website at [www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/alberta-community-partnership](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/alberta-community-partnership).

### *Sponsorships*

**There are a number** of sponsorship sources available for funding your ATS service. These include corporate sponsorships and in-kind sponsorships. A description of each of these types of sponsorships and links to additional information on each is provided below and on pages 92 and 93.

- Corporate Sponsorships  
Corporate sponsors can be an important source of funding for many community-based ATS services. Corporate sponsors (e.g., grocery store chains, banks, oil companies, etc.) may be willing to commit larger sums of money than individuals in exchange for

## BUILDING A *SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

promotion of their service and/or of their contribution to your ATS service. Building relationships with corporate sponsors will be key to your fundraising activities. For information on building corporate sponsor relationships see [www.communitysector.nl.ca/voluntary-sector-resources/funding-and-fundraising/tips-corporate-fundraising](http://www.communitysector.nl.ca/voluntary-sector-resources/funding-and-fundraising/tips-corporate-fundraising).

Alberta Culture and Tourism also has produced an informative and free toolkit for building corporate relationships with non-profit organizations. Please refer to [www.culture.alberta.ca/community/resources-and-links/tools/](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/community/resources-and-links/tools/).

### ● In-Kind Sponsors

In-kind sponsors donate goods or services rather than cash as their sponsorship offering. For example, a local bakery may sponsor your launching event, monthly Committee/Board meetings, or a presentation at a town council meeting by providing participants with coffee and goodies. In this sense, the bakery is not making a cash donation, but making a donation of goods instead. Some different in-kind sponsors include:

#### → *Media Sponsors*

A media sponsor is a company that finances or secures media coverage for an organization, program, or event. For example, a media sponsor may pay for advertising your ATS service in a local paper or pay for putting up a billboard or filming a television commercial. The advantage of this type of sponsorship

is that a sponsor may simultaneously promote their own company by tagging ads with their business logo and verbiage such as, 'brought to you by' or 'sponsored by' the name of the company.

#### → *Location Sponsors*

A business may offer the use of its facilities as a form of sponsorship. For example, a company that allows your Committee/Board to use its boardroom as a meeting venue is serving as a location sponsor. Likewise, the local church that allows you to hold a launching event on its property, or a community centre that donates free use of its community hall is also considered a location sponsor.

#### → *Labour Sponsors*

A corporation that donates the time and talent of its employees is considered a labour sponsor. In this instance, the company allows its employees to work on behalf of a charity or community organization during normal work hours and still be paid their normal wage. Examples of labour-sponsorship activities include employees of a local grocery store who help in your launching event and subsequent other events or a local autobody shop offering to paint your service vehicle.

### *Fundraising Events*

**There are several methods** to raising funds within the community. Community-driven fundraising is a great way to keep your community involved with your ATS service. Keep in mind, however, that community-driven fundraising takes dedicated effort from several volunteers.

Before organizing a fundraising event, it can be helpful to first identify what your fundraising goals are and how best to meet them. Coming up with a fundraising plan will help to provide a starting point for your fundraising activities and can help to direct the course of action your organization takes.

#### **Some important considerations when developing a fundraising plan include:**

- The goal – how much money does your organization need to raise?
- The mission – why your organization needs to reach this goal; what will your organization do with the funds?
- The method – how is your organization going to achieve the goal (e.g., individuals, group donors, online, silent auctions, crowdfunding, annual campaigns, etc.)?
- The timeline – the time period or date when each step of fundraising needs to be accomplished.

After coming up with a fundraising plan, one of the next steps is to plan a fundraising event. For more information on how to successfully plan and carry out a fundraising event, refer to the following online resource at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cgd/fndrsng-eng.html#ApA](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cgd/fndrsng-eng.html#ApA).

#### **Examples of community-driven fundraising events are:**

- Silent auctions of items donated by community members;
- Garage sale of items donated by the community;
- Artistic performances by community members;
- Craft sales;
- 50/50 – ticket sales;
- For information on fundraising activities that require a licence see [www.aglc.ca/pdf/charitable\\_gaming/charitable\\_gaming\\_policies\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.aglc.ca/pdf/charitable_gaming/charitable_gaming_policies_handbook.pdf).

#### **Please refer to the following links for some great ideas on community-driven fundraising:**

[www.canadafundraiser.com/](http://www.canadafundraiser.com/)

Also, CanadaHelps is a non-profit organization that serves Canadian charities and donors by offering resources to fundraise online. Canada Helps also offers free fundraising webinars (see [www.canadahelps.org/en/charity-life/webinars-events/](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charity-life/webinars-events/)).

## USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR FUNDRAISING

**TECHNOLOGY CAN BE USEFUL** to help meet donation goals and procure funds as it enables people to quickly and easily donate money over the internet.

There are a number of online fundraising platforms for charities and non-profit organizations. Many of you may have heard of crowdfunding, which is a means of raising funds through the collection of small contributions from the general public (known as the 'crowd') using the Internet and social media. However, because of the recency of this type of fundraising, it is recommended that you do your homework and seek legal advice before initiating an online fundraising platform for your organization.

If you have developed a website for your ATS service, you can set up a link on your website to allow donations to be made directly on your homepage. Again, you will want to seek legal advice before initiating this form of fundraising.

**The following online resource provides tips on how to begin fundraising using the internet:**

[www.knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-use-the-internet-for-fundraising](http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-use-the-internet-for-fundraising)

---

## ii. Marketing Strategies

**WHEN DETERMINING** how best to market your service, you need to think about the most effective ways to let many people know about it, and most importantly to let the people who will use your service know about it. Social media may be a useful and cost-effective marketing tool for your organization, as it allows you to get the word out to many people at a negligible cost. Another strategy you may look into is advertising in your local newspaper, as many people in your target clientele may read the newspaper regularly. Opportunities to speak on a local radio station also could help to spread

the word about your ATS service. Additionally, putting up flyers at lodges and senior's centres may be a good way to market your service. Oxfam Canada has developed a *Fundraising Toolkit* that contains useful information on marketing as well as other topics relevant to fundraising in Canada including fundraising ideas, organizing an event, marketing, and legal considerations of fundraising. Please refer to this resource at [www.go.oxfam.ca/docs/hungry4change/fundraising-toolkit-2013-2014.pdf](http://www.go.oxfam.ca/docs/hungry4change/fundraising-toolkit-2013-2014.pdf).



---

### iii. Fostering Collaborations and Partnerships

**IT IS ESSENTIAL** that your ATS service look outward and build partnerships with external agencies such as other organizations dealing with seniors in your community, local businesses and services, media, and legislative bodies. Collaborating with local businesses and services such as shops, grocery stores, doctors' offices, and pharmacies could mean something as simple as developing a mutual advertising partnership. For instance, when seniors or accompanying adult children of seniors attend medical appointments at the local doctor's office, the receptionist at the office can ask them if they are aware of your ATS service in the community and provide them with your brochure.

Another avenue of growth is to foster a good relationship with the local media. Media partnerships can improve the visibility of your ATS service and can assist in updating the community and potential partners on the success and importance of your service.

Lastly, partnering with neighbouring towns and rural communities might be mutually beneficial as this might lead to increased cooperation and expansion of routes for your ATS service.



---

## iv. Promoting Community Engagement and Leadership

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** can be thought of as the process of building relationships with community members who are interested in working together with your organization as an ongoing partner. These members will build strong support for the mission of your ATS service, with the end goal of making the community a better place to live. Unlike marketing strategies, community engagement encourages the building of trust and making connections with the community, while raising awareness and visibility. Community engagement is different from marketing in one key way – while a marketing strategy is meant to be broad and reach a wider audience; community engagement is about interpersonal exchange at the individual level.

Community engagement is about connecting at a personal level. An example of this would be the Committee/Board members and volunteers of your ATS service talking to and

engaging with community members at local meetings or events. Volunteers can be an important resource for your ATS service. A helpful resource for recruiting and retaining volunteers is available from Volunteer Canada. Volunteer Canada is a non-profit organization that is committed to increasing and supporting volunteerism and civic participation in Canada. They collaborate closely with volunteer centres, local organizations, and national corporations to promote and broaden volunteering in Canada. Please refer to the following resources from Volunteer Canada:

[www.volunteer.ca/engagement](http://www.volunteer.ca/engagement)

[www.volunteer.ca/content/canadian-code-volunteer-involvement-2012-edition](http://www.volunteer.ca/content/canadian-code-volunteer-involvement-2012-edition)

---

## v. Ensuring Organizational Stability

**ENGAGED AND DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS** are the pillars of your ATS service. One of the most essential components of developing a sustainable ATS service is ensuring that there continues to be dedicated individuals working for 'the cause'. Many smaller community-based services operate with the efforts of one or a few volunteers. These individuals take up the responsibility for many tasks, devote many hours to the cause, and serve as its 'champions'. When such 'champions' leave the organization, however, the organization faces challenges in its operations. It is prudent to ensure that the knowledge and experiences of

these 'champions' be recorded (through written or other means) and communicated to as many people on your Committee/Board and in the community. Having several dedicated volunteers who share the responsibilities and work as a team help to ensure the ongoing sustainability of your ATS service. It also is a good idea to discuss succession planning within your Committee/Board to ensure smooth transitions of Committee/Board members who join or who are leaving. One way to do this is to identify dedicated volunteers and engaged community members and provide them with opportunities for leadership on an ongoing basis.



## BUILDING A *SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE*

There are seven components necessary to ensure the sustainability of an organization. The seven major components, and associated sub-components, are shown in Figure 6-1 below.

For guidance and direction on each of these components, see [www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/publications-a-z/612-the-seven-components-of-organizational-sustainability-](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/publications-a-z/612-the-seven-components-of-organizational-sustainability-).



**Figure 6-1**  
The seven components  
necessary to ensure  
organizational sustainability.

---

### vi. Conducting an Internal Review

**AN INTERNAL REVIEW IS ESSENTIAL** to ensure that the ATS service model adopted by your organization is aligned with the goals set out in the beginning and that it meets the needs of seniors in your community. An internal review should be conducted annually. This review provides an opportunity for monitoring key components of service growth and viability. Timely and comprehensive reviews, in addition to service evaluation from users and the operator/driver(s) (see Section 5) will help your Committee/Board make informed decisions about changes to service provision. Key aspects to consider of an internal review include:

#### a. Service utilization

Monitoring aspects of service utilization will help you to determine the areas that can be expanded or scaled down, which can influence how your service changes over time. Some considerations for reviewing service utilization are:

- The segment(s) of the population in your community that is being served by your ATS service;
- Number of people in your community utilizing your ATS service;
- Number of rides provided per month;
- Number of rides provided on weekdays or weekends;

- Number of rides provided in the morning, afternoon, and evening;
- Types of trips that people are making (e.g., for attending medical appointments, accessing 'essential' services [groceries, banking], attending social functions, religious activities, etc.);
- Number of trips missed by users;
- Number of trip pre-cancellations.

#### b. Service operation

Monitoring aspects of your service operation will help you to determine the areas where efficiencies can be initiated or changes can be made to ensure smooth operation of the service. Some considerations for evaluating service operations are:

- Level of overall user satisfaction;
- User satisfaction with the cost of the ride, booking rides, and method of payment;
- Level of driver satisfaction;
- Total passengers carried compared to total trip capacity;
- Number of trips without accidents or incidents involving passenger safety;
- Number of complaints;
- Vehicle maintenance;

- Renewal of insurance information and regulatory documents.

### c. Financial operations

Monitoring aspects of financial operations will help you to determine the financial health and viability of your ATS service. Some considerations for evaluating the financial operations of your service include:

- Expenses and revenue;
- Costs to operate the vehicle (e.g., driving, insurance, and fuel costs);
- Costs to maintain the vehicle;
- Cost per trip compared to ATS services in other jurisdictions.

Documentation in the form of a report is often required by funding agencies and will inform your stakeholders and funders on how the service is performing. Some funding agencies also provide templates for reporting the results of the internal review. Results of the internal review also will allow you to establish benchmarks or comparisons for future service delivery.

Partnering with complimentary services in your community and growing your ATS service should be exciting! It is always a good idea to inform your partners when making decisions and changes to your service.

### THE GOAL OF THIS SECTION OF THE *TOOLKIT*

was to provide you with the necessary information and tools for building the financial and organizational sustainability of your ATS service. By the end of this section you should have addressed the following:

- Developed a fundraising strategy
- Developed an effective marketing strategy
- Developed community collaborations and sponsorships
- Communicated with corporate sponsors
- Developed collaborations with local businesses and media
- Discussed conducting an internal review

**IN CLOSING**, our hopes are that you have found this *Toolkit* informative and useful. As many of you know, there are a number of challenges to developing and implementing ATS services in urban and rural communities. One of those challenges is the absence of 'easily accessible' and targeted information on development and implementation of ATS service provision. This *Toolkit* was developed to address that challenge. As such, the goal of this *Toolkit* is to provide communities in urban and rural Alberta with the resources needed for the successful development and implementation of sustainable, responsive models of ATS services. We trust that the information provided in the *Toolkit* will assist you in the development or enhancement of the transportation needs of seniors in your community.

---

## References

- 1 Alberta Treasury Board and Finance. (2015). *Population projection Alberta 2015-2041*. Retrieved from [www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-alberta-population-projections.pdf](http://www.finance.alberta.ca/aboutalberta/population-projections/2015-2041-alberta-population-projections.pdf)
- 2 Glasgow, N., & Blakely, R. M. (2000). Older nonmetropolitan residents' evaluations of their transportation arrangements. *The Journal of Applied Gerontology, 19*(1), 95–116.
- 3 Dobbs, B., & Strain, L. (2008). Staying connected: Issues of mobility of older rural adults. In N. Keating, *Rural ageing: A good place to grow old?* (pp. 87–96). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- 4 Alberta Government. (2015). *Age-friendly Alberta*. Retrieved from [www.seniors.alberta.ca/seniors/age-friendly-alberta.html](http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/seniors/age-friendly-alberta.html)
- 5 The World Health Organization. (2007). *Global age-friendly cities: A guide*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author.
- 6 Techopedia. (2015). *Project plan*. Retrieved from [www.techopedia.com/definition/24775/project-plan](http://www.techopedia.com/definition/24775/project-plan)
- 7 Dobbs, B. M., Lee, V., & Song, J. (2011). *Seniors' alternate transportation: A national and international scan of existing models and identification of unique models and innovative solutions*. Edmonton, AB: The DR Group.
- 8 Imagine Canada. (2013). *Starting an organization*. Retrieved from [www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/starting-organization](http://www.sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/charity-tax-tools/starting-organization)
- 9 The Resource Center for Volunteer Organizations. (2011). *How to incorporate as a non-profit organization*. Retrieved from [www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/rcvo-howtoincorporate.pdf](http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/rcvo-howtoincorporate.pdf)
- 10 Institute of Governance. (2015). *Defining governance*. Retrieved from [www.iog.ca/defining-governance/](http://www.iog.ca/defining-governance/)
- 11 The Beverly Foundation. (2001). *Supplemental transportation programs for seniors*. Pasadena, CA: Author.
- 12 The Beverly Foundation. (2005). *Volunteer driver turnkey kit: A 5 A's "senior friendliness" evaluation strategy for volunteer driver programs*. Pasadena, CA: Author.
- 13 McKeown, L., & Brocca, J. (2009). *Internet shopping in Canada: An examination of data, trends, and patterns*. (Catalogue No. 88F0006X, no. 5). Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.
- 14 Statistics Canada. (2012). *Individual internet use and e-commerce, 2012*. Retrieved from [www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/131028/dq131028a-cansim-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/131028/dq131028a-cansim-eng.htm)
- 15 Pidborochynski, T., & Dobbs, B. (2014). *An in-depth analysis of ride-scheduling software programs for use by community-based organizations providing alternate transportation services to seniors*. Edmonton, AB: The DR Group.
- 16 Reynolds, M. (2015). *What are policy manuals?* Retrieved from [www.ehow.com/facts\\_6190577\\_policy-manuals\\_.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_6190577_policy-manuals_.html)
- 17 Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- 18 CAA. (2016). *Driving costs calculator*. Retrieved from [www.caa.ca/car\\_costs/](http://www.caa.ca/car_costs/)
- 19 Dobbs, B., & Pidborochynski, T. (2011). *Perceptions and use of alternate transportation for seniors: Results from a provincial survey*. Edmonton, AB: The DR Group.
- 20 Dobbs, B., & Pidborochynski, T. (2015). *Understanding the transportation needs of seniors and persons with disabilities in a sub-region of the Capital Region*. Edmonton, AB: The DR Group.



